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MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS

By the same author

THE NETHERLANDS DISPLAY'D
SUNDY GREAT GENTLEMEN
WILLIAM, PRINCE OF ORANGE
THE THIRD MARY STUART
ETC., ETC.

The Bodley Head



MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS AT 17
From a wax medallion in the Breslau Museum

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS DAUGHTER OF DEBATE

by

MARJORIE BOWEN

"The Daughter of Debate, that eke discord
 doth sow."

Ascribed to Queen Elizabeth.

"Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman
Reign most in her I know not; but it shows
A fearful madness: I owe her much of pity."

WEBSTER, *The Duchess of Malfi.*

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FOREWORD

THE writers who select the first Mary Stewart as their subject usually seem impelled to offer some apology for dealing yet once more with a figure so familiar to readers of history, fiction, and legend.

It may, however, be reasonably argued that the story of this beautiful and unfortunate woman has become one of the immortal stories of the world, which will continue for many centuries yet to inspire historians, romantics, and poets to a re-telling, and attract many thousands of readers into a re-reading.

This tale can no more be staled by repetition than that of the Siege of Troy. It has become part of the common material of every writer, as the visit of the Three Kings, the departure of Adonis on his fatal hunt, and the rescue of Andromeda by Perseus were subjects enjoyed in common by all the painters of the Renaissance, and reproduced in numberless variations ranging from masterpieces of the highest inspirational merit to the hack work of copyists.

It is not likely that the most diligent of historians will ever discover further vital information relating to the history of Mary Queen of Scots. The most laborious researches have been made into every detail of her career and into the careers of those most intimately associated with her, and it would appear that the final result has been, some while since, yielded.

Anyone interested in this poignant episode of our history may, without undue fatigue, study the contemporary documents on which all judgments must be founded and come to his own conclusions as to the right or wrong of the case. No historian, however well equipped in knowledge, penetration, and impartiality, can do more than offer his opinion of this subject which is so obscure and so mysterious. It is the historian's profession to chronicle facts; if he be a scientific historian he may scarcely,

even, draw deductions from them, and his accurate volume will contain nothing but those carefully sifted collections of these same facts which, unrelated and often contradictory, appear to the lay reader to bear curiously little resemblance to a whole truth.

Yet, once the historian begins to sort and to arrange his facts, to endeavour to correlate them by the light of his own intuition and experience, too often by the light of his own emotions and prejudices, he must cease to be an historian and begin to invade the realms of poetry and fiction. Or, if he be not sober-minded but if he be partisan in spirit, the realms of polemic and special pleading.

So it seems that this business of writing of the past is attended by especial difficulties and that he who shall succeed at such a task must be especially gifted and especially fortunate, in his choice of a subject, in the manner of his approach, and in the final shape which he gives his work.

Kings and queens, heroines and heroes, those who used to be named the great and the famous, have for some time fallen out of favour in official history. The tendency has long been to deal more or less entirely with the histories of people, not those of their rulers or counsellors, with the cause and effect of those large movements which brought about those startling and dramatic climaxes which were formerly ascribed to individual character and effort.

Moved by something the same spirit modern biographers, discarding the one-time methods which displayed a personality in formal and stately fashion, stressing his virtues, glossing over his weaknesses, and giving considerable importance to all his public acts while glancing only with decorous reserve at the incidents of his private life, now go to the other extreme and, in selecting subjects for their books, merely choose butts for their wit. They delight to show their particular great man not only as not a hero to his valet but as not a hero to anyone else.

This attitude has in it, obviously, much of essential truth. No human being can be definitely a hero or a heroine on every occasion and in every circumstance. But, an insistence on this fact, which might, with a little humour, be taken for granted, distorts the picture which the author is creating in his feverish search for the exact and humiliating truth.

It is doubtful whether this method of caustic, mocking biography is really much relished by most of us. We may, for

a while, be amused to learn that the man whom we have seen always taught to regard as more than life-size was, in many important aspects, a veritable pygmy, but our mirth is inclined to be dry and hollow. We are all of us vicariously humiliated in the degradation of the hero who must, in order to have attained the position from which his last biographer has carefully dragged him, have at one time or another represented a national idea or some achievement admired by all humanity, and who has therefore been the object of the secret emulation and applause of all of us.

The game has also proved too easy to be long popular—the amateur and the hack have brought into disrepute a school of writing which was inaugurated by the brilliant talent of distinguished men of letters. There is already a reaction in favour of the heroic element in humanity. But, as both the stone figure on the pedestal clothed in official robes, and the tattered scarecrow who for a while took his place, seem out of fashion, how shall those of us who feel impelled to evoke some portion of the past, go about our task? Psycho-analysis, so much run after a few years ago, and containing as it does a great deal of essential truth, has been staled by abuse. Having lost its novelty it has become boring. Dissect any given soul as you will the vital elements of its composition are as likely to escape you as if you confined yourself to a merely surface treatment.

To admit the potency of these arguments is to leave oneself without defence. The truth, then, always escapes; it is no more to be discovered than the gold of El Dorado. We none of us even know the truth about ourselves: how then can we hope to know it about another human being, and about one who has been dead, perhaps several hundred years? Why should we write at all on a subject of which we must of necessity know so little? The answer can only lie largely in the perversity of human nature—we desire to attempt the impossible. We hear from our earliest childhood of a certain subject or a certain character until we become fascinated, perhaps obsessed. Although reason tells us that everything is known and everything has been said on this matter, yet we long to re-arrange these familiar materials according to our own sense of design or of decoration, to make our own deductions from bare facts, to re-tell, by the light of our own experience, these experiences with which everyone is familiar.

We think that perhaps there is something which has not yet been said and that we can say it. In brief, we wish to paint our own pictures of the familiar scene, to give these legendary creatures faces of our own fashioning, to draw our own design on their robes. We wish to present once again Venus and Adonis in a fresh glade with trees of our own choice overhead, and flowers of our own affections underfoot.

We long to write our own love stories, though people have been writing them since the world began, and most of them are likely to be better preserving than our own. It is a desire akin to the yearning to grow our own roses and lilies, though the most modest florist's shop for a few shillings can sell us better than those which are the product of our utmost care.

It is in this spirit and with the utmost diffidence that the following study of Mary Queen of Scots has been written. There is little need for it and less excuse for it, but the author was impelled to write yet one more version of this ancient story. It does not claim the dignity of a history nor of an official biography, though a conscientious study of all the facts available to one who cannot indulge in original research work, has gone to the completing of this study.

It has not been composed in any spirit of partisanship, nor with any idea of propaganda. The author has no personal feeling about any of the causes which convulsed Europe in the latter half of the sixteenth century. This book, then, which can only hope to make a modest claim on the attention of the general reader, and is not intended for the student or the specialist, sets out to be a portrait, broad in outline, but detailed in background and appointments, of a woman whose life and death are as exciting and uncommon as any in history.

This volume is not of sufficient pretensions to warrant the inclusion of any attempt at a bibliography of the subject. A glance at the catalogue of any large library will show at once the bewildering number of works which have been devoted to Mary Stewart. Not only has her career exhausted all the resources of the historian, it has been adorned by the verses of excellent poets and the fiction of accomplished novelists. Anyone who, taking up this book, desires to know more of Mary Queen of Scots, or wishes to read an account of her from another pen, will have no difficulty in finding where to make his choice, or even in, as already noted, studying for himself those original and contemporary documents on which

all history, poetry, and fiction relating to this subject must, of a necessity, be founded.

For the same reason the book has not been much burdened with notes, but the reader may rest assured that when any statement is given as an undoubted fact the writer makes this statement on the authority of a reliable historian and the latest research. The dates are mostly old style; always so on documents and letters before 1582.¹ Where they have been taken from later sources it has not always been possible to discover if O.S. or N.S. is meant. Some dates, notably that of the Darnley marriage, remain doubtful. The spelling follows modern English usage.

In some parts of Queen Mary's story there cannot be any question of facts—all becomes speculation. Here the present author, like all other authors meddling with this fascinating tale, has been forced to rely upon logical deductions from circumstance and character, and as such logical deductions the various suppositions and surmises are given. But there has been no twisting of known facts, no manœuvring of circumstances to fit any preconceived ideas, no half-truths employed, and where previous workers have found it possible, among a confusion of conflicting evidence, to arrive at a definite conclusion this has been stated. Where the author's own opinion is advanced it is given as having the value of a personal opinion and nothing more. There are no fictitious conversations, meditations, nor descriptions of imaginary scenes. The reader may rely on it that nothing set forth here is the invention of the author.

While, however, not venturing upon the arduous task of compiling a bibliography, nor of that scarcely less complicated labour of giving all the sources from which the following study was compiled, the author feels compelled to mention a few modern books of distinguished merit essential to any study of Mary Queen of Scots. The insoluble mystery of the Casket Letters is not likely to be ever dealt with more clearly and effectively than in "The Casket Letters and Mary Queen of Scots" by T. F. Henderson (Edinburgh, 1889). Much as this subject has been debated, no important discovery has been made and no definite conclusion come to since the publication

¹ Gregory XIII's reform of the Julian calendar was adopted in 1582 by most Roman Catholics but not accepted all over Europe until mid-eighteenth century.

of this book, which is written with notable clarity and impartiality.

"The Mystery of Mary Stewart" by Andrew Lang (London, 1901), is intensely interesting, both as closely argued history and as vividly written literature. The author says in his preface the object of his book was to show how the whole problem was affected by the discovery of the Lennox papers, which were here used for the first time.

In two excellent volumes: "Mary Queen of Scots and Queen Elizabeth" (1914) and, "The Downfall of Mary Stewart" (1921), Mr. Frank Mumby has collected most of the important contemporary letters dealing with the fortunes of the two Queens; these take the story up to Von Raumer's "Mary and Elizabeth" (1836). The three volumes together give an admirable selection from the bulky archives of the period.

The best known study and the most conspicuous by its literary ability written by a woman on Mary Queen of Scots, is that by Agnes Strickland.¹ It is marred, however, by partiality, and Miss Strickland lacked much of the material that has since been discovered.

Sir John Skelton's "Life of Maitland of Lethington", that by Mr. Hosack on the Casket Letters, the romantic "Life" by Chalmers, published in 1818, which inspired Sir Walter Scott to write his study of Mary in "The Abbot", the Dispatches of the Spanish Ambassador, translated and edited by Major Martin Hume, 1894, are all outstanding books among the voluminous literature on the subject. The Babington Conspiracy has been dealt with exhaustively and impartially by John Hungerford Pollen, S.J., in "Mary Queen of Scots and the Babington Conspiracy"; the other works of Father Pollen on this subject are justly celebrated.

Those famous and established historians, Hume, Robertson, Lang, Mignet, and Froude have each given his version of the story of Mary Queen of Scots. None of these, however, affected to write without prejudice. Their methods have been largely outdated and they did not have the information available which has been ready to the hands of later historians. The "Memoirs" of Claude Nau have been carefully edited by Father Stephenson.

¹ "Lives of the Queens of Scotland" by Agnes Strickland. V. 3—7—1852—8.

From France, Germany, indeed from every European country as well as from America, has come books on the subject of Mary Queen of Scots. But, as Andrew Lang remarked, "though every inch of the ground has been inspected as if by detectives on the scene of a recent murder, there are points as yet unseized even by German scholars, and it may be that some acute and fortunate historian will yet discover some piece of evidence which will supersede everything that has been already written about this most unfortunate of Queens." Several excellent modern biographies by famous authors will come at once to the minds of interested readers.

Most of the old Scots verse, etc., quoted, is from the enchanting Anthology "News from Scotland" by the Hon. Eleanor Brougham (1926).

The description of Bothwell's supposed mummy is from the account by M. Jusserand, given in Appendix A to "The Mystery of Mary Stewart" by Andrew Lang, 1901.

Among the most attractive of recent biographies is the enchanting study by Eric Linklater and the brilliant work by Sir Edward Parry.

A rare book is the Life of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, by Professor Frederik Schiern, first published in 1863, translated from the Danish by the Rev. David Berry and published in Edinburgh in 1880. This contains details of Mary's third husband seldom or never to be found in English works.

It seems necessary to add a few sentences on the portraits of Mary Queen of Scots, and those of the personages most intimately concerned in her life and reign, for this is a point of considerable importance. When dealing with a character who lived before the days when portrait painting was employed, one always feels that one is dealing with only a half-glimpsed figure, however many indisputable facts or literary studies may be to hand. A single glance at an authentic portrait is often worth pages of description, and many a conspicuous personage of the past remains dim and uncertain in the mind because it is impossible to ascertain what he looked like when he moved among his fellows.

It is easy to form a mental picture of Mary Stewart. In "The Portraits of Mary Queen of Scots" by Lionel Cust (1903), reproductions of all the authentic portraits of the Queen and many of those which were long popularly but falsely supposed to be true likenesses are given. The genuine portraits are not

numerous. Sir George Scharf and Mr. Lionel Cust after exhaustive researches in France, England and Scotland found that the only important indisputable portraits are these: The little drawing in red and black crayon of Mary, taken when nine years old, and another (this in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) of Mary as Dauphine of France, probably taken at the time of her marriage in 1558, when she was aged fifteen years and four months, then the drawing by "Janet", or François Clouet, (possibly Jehan à Court?) drawn from life when Mary was a young girl, and the famous "*Deuil Blanc*" of the young Queen in widow's dress taken immediately after the death of her first husband, François II, in 1561, when Mary was eighteen. From this exquisite drawing, which is also in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, numerous portraits in oils have been derived, two versions being in the Royal collection.

Although there are many interesting portraits of Mary extant which may or may not be genuine, or may or may not be authentic copies of lost originals, the next undoubted portrait of importance, according to these authorities, was taken many years later, during the captivity in Sheffield Castle. It is strongly believed to have been painted from life during the Queen's residence under the care of the Earl of Shrewsbury; it is now in the collection of the Duke of Devonshire at Hardwicke Hall. It is signed P. Oudry and is a poor piece of work, probably the effort of a journeyman painter or embroiderer.

It was copied again and again, every detail of attire being reproduced with a reverent fidelity, which shows that Mary's contemporaries and her immediate descendants regarded the portrait as authentic. It is possible, however, that it may have been a copy of a miniature taken from life. The "*Morton*" portrait, formerly regarded as a copy of this, is much superior and may be the original version.

After this there is nothing except the posthumous monument erected in Westminster Abbey by James I in 1603 and finished in 1609, the work of Cornelius Cure, master mason to the King, and his son, William Cure, painted and gilded by James Marney. The face of the figure on this tomb is supposed to have been modelled from a death mask and contains most of the salient characteristics notable in the authentic portraits. Several medals and the profiles on coins, including the exceedingly beautiful example by Primavera, help us to reconstruct the person of Mary Queen of Scots.

It is as notable as regrettable that there is no portrait of her extant in the heyday of her beauty and power when she was reigning Queen of Scotland. We see her as a child of nine years old, as a bride of fifteen and a widow of eighteen, and then there is no other likeness of her until she appears as a widowed captive, one who has lost everything but life, and who is nearly forty years of age. After that there is only the death mask or the face drawn from paintings or memory, as in the memorial pictures, the most important of which is that ordered by Elizabeth Curle, sister of Mary's secretary, Gilbert Curle.

In "The Stewarts, being outlines of the personal history of the family", Mr. Foster reproduces a gorgeous portrait (that in the possession of the Earl of Leven and Melville), painted with great fire and skill, which he claims to be that of Mary when in Scotland during her brief reign. It is tempting to believe that he is right—the face appears to be that of Mary Stewart. She is extremely richly dressed, and is shown without the widow's cap with which she is too often associated. It seems, however, doubtful whether there were in Scotland at that period any painters capable of producing so finished and elegant a work of art, though it may be plausibly supposed that she brought her Court painter with her—the Jehan à Court who may have made the lovely "Deuil Blanc".

Andrew Lang, in "Portraits and Jewels of Mary Queen of Scots", sponsors this picture, which he believed represented Mary about 1559-1560. He identified the jewels worn in the portrait with entries in Mary's inventories. This book gives a slightly different list of "authentic" portraits, including, besides the three French pencil drawings, the elegant wax medallion in the Breslau Museum of Mary at seventeen, the exquisite "Virtutis Amore" belonging to the Duke of Portland, 1559-1560, and a miniature in a reliquary, circa 1584. After a prolonged and careful study of the above mentioned pictures (a description of which will be found in the text of the present volume), it is possible to build up a portrait of Mary sufficiently accurate and lively for us to visualize her at every period of her career. There are, besides the drawings, paintings and the wax relief, several medals that help to throw light on the personality of the Queen, and a contemporary caricature of Mary as a mermaid that is supposed to give some idea of her fascination.

All these portraits are reproduced either in Mr. Cust's book or in that of Andrew Lang.

When we have considered all these portraits and got them, as it were "by heart", we shall have a tolerable conception of what this famous woman looked like, even though it be that her greatest charms were those of the most transient nature, that cannot be preserved on canvas nor in words. But what of the woman herself? The soul behind the smooth features?

Mary Stewart belongs not only to history, but to legend and romance. Every historical character, like every country, has its legends—something neither true nor false, but a reflection or a shadow, as intangible as the mirrored image of a flower in a sheet of water, or in a pane of glass, yet full of a subtle truth and of an endless enchantment.

If we wish to play with the legend, to beguile ourselves with the romance it were better for us to ignore historians, to leave unread the chronicles and facts, lest we be disillusioned, perhaps shocked or disgusted. This gracious and lovely figure who has inspired so many poets, who has been to so many people "*La Princesse Lorraine*", the lady of Tripoli for whom Rudel must search, and for whom, when he finds her, he must die, was, despite all these charming fantasies, a figure of historical importance.

She represented the last hope of the ancient Church in Scotland. She was used as a pawn in a futile attempt to annex Scotland to France; she was, for many years, a most vital figure in the bitterly disputed Succession to the English Crown, and in conclusion, she was the mother of the man who founded a new English dynasty. She was, during her lifetime, not only the rallying point of all the intriguers and malcontents of her own Faith, but after her death she was regarded as a martyr to this Faith, and her canonization was mooted at the Vatican.

She became, to very many, almost as soon as the axe fell at Fotherinhay, a symbolic figure—a woman, foully betrayed, deeply wronged, treacherously persecuted and slandered, who died with unblemished dignity and courage for her Faith. On the other hand, she was to those who were not of her religious persuasion "one of a monstrous regiment of women" as John Knox said in a too-famous phrase, "a Delilah, a poor, silly Jezebel", as another contemporary writer named her—a scarlet woman—wanton, shameless, who justly paid the penalty for

manifold and heartless follies. To others she was more than this—a lost creature stained by a monstrous crime, an adulteress, a murderer, a liar, forsaken, cruel, treacherous, false to the heart's core.

Others again, while admitting, albeit reluctantly, her essential guilt endeavour to give her the dignity of an overwhelming passion—that rage of love which was the urge behind Clytemnestra's crime and the frantic shame of Phædra.

These severe but pitying critics of Queen Mary allow her a certain grandeur. She was, they argue, splendid, even honourable in her native character, but so driven by circumstance and emotion as to become a very fury. Then again to others who have but a vague and untidy idea, familiar as her name may be to them, of the actual events of her life and the actual details known of her character, she is a merely symbolic figure, faint and lovely as one of the half-fairy ladies out of the ancient minstrelsy of her native country. She is not to these a queen, but *the Queen*, for ever beautiful, for ever crowned, melancholy and wronged, the lady whom every page and stainless knight must love, although her love be fatal, whom every youth must hope to serve, though her service will bring nothing but death.

Her exquisite face is half hidden by a veil of finest lawn, her perfect hands hold lightly a Crucifix or a string of holy beads, her eyes are turned heavenwards, when she glances towards the earth it is in modest sorrow or gentle disdain. Her secret heart is inscrutable—she leans for ever from a mullioned window or on a terrace or balcony twined with roses, she touches a lute or listens to the singing of one of her bright girls. She is always dignified, disturbed by neither passion nor regret; a long captivity borne with unblemished heroism is concluded by an atrocious death, only redeemed from the utmost horror by the dignity and beauty of her acceptance of her bitter fate.

Many pictures, poems and novels have upheld this view of Mary Stewart. This is her legend, though there are some who a little vary the dim, romantic figure which they see as that of a noble woman hungry for true love, always betrayed by false love, always searching for the ideal lover and for ever ruined by the basest of men.

Let us endeavour in the space and with the abilities at our command to see if we can find the truth of this long dead Mary Stewart, the woman who certainly did not know that she

was going to be either saint, martyr, or heroine, who could not have been aware of her own legend.

What was she like as she lived and moved in France, Scotland, and England three hundred and fifty years ago? Is it possible to so reconstruct her life, her actions, her likeness that the reader may, for himself, judge of what she was? This task seems difficult, if not impossible, but there may be some interest in the attempt.

M.B.

RICHMOND,
SURREY.

October, 1933.

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Part I

FRANCE

1542—1561

In the day shalt thou make thy plant to grow, and in
the morning shalt thou make thy seed to flourish; but
the harvest shall be removed in the day of inheritance
and there shall be deadly sorrow."

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

I

FRANCE

1542—1561

MARY STEWART was born at Linlithgow on December 8th, the Festival of the Immaculate Conception, 1542, sole heiress of one of the most splendid families, and one of the greatest misfortunes in Europe. The Crown of Scotland had been in the possession of the family of Stewart for more than two hundred years, for it came with the marriage of Margery, daughter of Robert Bruce, to Walter Stewart in 1315. All of the monarchs of this family had been notable men, expressing in their persons and their actions the highest ideals of the times in which they lived. Nearly all of them had suffered violent deaths.

* * * * * *

James I, the graceful and elegant author of "The King's Quair", and by some considered the ablest of the Scottish sovereigns, was brutally murdered by a conspiracy of his nobles in February, 1446.

The result of this crime was the long Regency of the English Queen, Jane Beaufort; the reign of a woman acting as guardian for a child has seldom been other than disastrous. The second James, killed by the bursting of a cannon while he was laying siege to the Castle of Roxburgh (the Scottish King having espoused the Yorkist cause in the Wars of the Roses), left the country in a distracted state and under the rule of a child of seven years of age—James III, whose Regent was his mother, Mary of Guelders.

This king was murdered in the flower of his age after a fight with the rebels at Sauchieburn, near Stirling, in 1488, leaving the throne, which had descended directly from father to son for a hundred years, to James IV, then a youth of sixteen, who had been suspected of fomenting the rebellion.

This prince, the grandfather of Mary Stewart and the man from whom she appears to have inherited many of her distinguished qualities, was one of the most remarkable figures of his time. Like his father and grandfather he was of athletic make, tall, handsome, dark-complexioned, with ruddy brown hair, a winning address, cultured, polished, of an ardent, romantic disposition. He spoke six languages and caused the first printing press to be set up in Edinburgh in 1507. Pedro di Ayala, the Ambassador of Ferdinand and Isabel of Spain, was enthusiastic in his praises of the Scotch king, who also impressed the Dutch philosopher Erasmus with his remarkable force of intellect.

In one of his dispatches to his master (July 25th, 1498), the Spanish Ambassador to Scotland writes what amounts to a panegyric on James IV, which is extremely interesting as showing the ideal of those times as far as kingly and manly qualities went, and in giving us a glimpse of Scotland, the rude kingdom of the North, as seen through the eyes of a cultured and intelligent Spaniard.

"The King is of noble stature, neither tall nor short, and as handsome in complexion and shape as a man can be.

"He speaks Latin very well, and French, German, Flemish, Italian, and Spanish. His own Scottish language is as different from English as Aragonese from Castilian. The King speaks besides the language of the savages who live in some parts of Scotland and on the islands. It is as different from Scottish as Biscayan is from Castilian. His knowledge of languages is wonderful.

"He is well read in the Bible and in some other devout books. He is a good historian; he has read many Latin and French histories, and has profited by them as he has a very good memory. He fears God and observes all the precepts of the Church; he does not eat meat on Wednesdays and Fridays; he would not ride on Sundays for any consideration, not even to Mass; he says all his prayers. Before transacting any business he hears two Masses. After Mass he has a cantata sung, during which he dispatches sometimes urgent business.

"He gives alms liberally, and is a severe judge, especially in the case of murderers. He has a great predilection for priests, and receives advice from them. Rarely, even in joking, a word escapes him that is not the truth. He prides himself much upon it and says it does not seem to him well for kings to swear their treaties as they do now—the oath of a king should be his royal word, as was the case in bygone days.

"He is neither prodigal nor avaricious, but liberal when occasion requires. He is courageous, even more so than a king should be. He is not a good captain because he begins to fight before he has

given his orders. He is active and works hard. When he is not at war he hunts in the mountains.

"I tell Your Highnesses the truth when I say that God has worked a miracle in him, for I have never seen out of Spain a man so temperate in eating and drinking. Indeed, such a thing seems to be superhuman in these countries. It may be about a year since he gave up (so at least is so believed) his love-making, as well from fear of God as from fear of scandal in this world.

"He is thought very much of here. I can say with truth that he esteems himself as much as though he were lord of the world. He loves war so much that I fear, judging from the provocations he receives, the peace will not last long. War is profitable for him and for the country."

The faults of this romantic character may be sensed even through the words of praise. James was arrogant, headstrong, had given scandal by youthful licentiousness, resented any attempts to curb his power, was led by the priests, and feeling, no doubt justly, superior to all who surrounded him, was determined to rely on his own inclinations and his own judgment.

He was, however, a most attractive prince, and bore, at least to a superficial eye, all the characteristics of a perfect knight of chivalry. He was fond of pageantry and splendour—his marriage with Margaret Tudor, "sweet, lusty, lovesome lady", turned the whole of Edinburgh into the background for a pageant.

On this occasion the Black Friars presented the bridal pair with a bottle containing three drops of the blood of Christ. Other details of these sumptuous nuptials show us the Queen playing at cards, dancing with the Countess of Surrey, the King performing on the clarichords, and leaping on an impetuous courser without putting a foot in the stirrup.

Like most great princes of that day James IV was passionately fond of music. Italian and Moorish musicians clad in red and black followed him from place to place, and we have seen how Di Ayala noted his habit of transacting urgent business to the soothing sound of a cantata.

He used his almost unbounded influence for the improvement of his kingdom and for the establishment of culture. In his reign was founded the University of Aberdeen, confirmed by a Bull of the Sixth Alexander, Roderigo Borgia. The Papal Bull answering the King's petition bears witness to the eagerness of James that "the city of old Aberdeen, in the northern

islands and mountains, in those northerly parts of the kingdom (which are in some places separated from the rest of the realm by arms of the sea and very steep mountains) in which regions are men who are uncultivated, ignorant of letters and almost wild on account of the too great distance from seats of learning and the dangers of travelling, should enjoy the privileges of a University where the liberal Arts, Theology, Canon and Civil Law and Medicine might be studied ".¹

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This splendid prince, who seemed so fortunate and so successful, who was so popular, respected, and feared, was betrayed by the defects of his own temperament, his impatience of contradiction, his impetuous and headstrong obstinacy, and his fantastic sense of knightly honour, into engaging himself in a brawl with his brother-in-law, Henry VIII of England. Ill-feeling was induced by petty Border quarrellings, and this was inflamed to fury in the sensitive mind of James by the capture of two Scottish privateers by English men-of-war, and by a letter from Anne of Brittany sent with a ring and a glove entreating the Scottish king as a true and loyal knight to assist a lady in distress and to advance for her sake " three steps into England ".

Taking no heed of the lamentations of his English Queen and the warnings of his most experienced advisers, James mustered the battle array of his kingdom with the flower of the Scottish nobility and crossed the Tweed in August, 1503. A few days afterwards there was fought the battle of Flodden Field, in which the Scots lost eight to ten thousand men, very few of whom were common soldiers. It was said that there was not one Scotch family of any distinction which did not lose one or more member on the field of Flodden. The mutilated body of the King was found under piles of slain and brought by his English conquerors to rest in the monastery at Sheen in Surrey.

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Another female Regency, another long minority faced the Scottish nation, already bowed by the disaster of Flodden, and torn by the contentions of the English and French factions, which were augmented by the marriage of the Queen Dowager, Margaret Tudor to the Earl of Angus.

¹ Aberdeen University was founded 1477. There were already two other such seats of learning in Scotland: St. Andrews, 1411; Glasgow, 1454. Edinburgh University was founded 1583.

As James V, who had not been two years old at the death of his father, grew up he revealed many of the affable and winning qualities which were already expected in the Stewarts. His manners were sympathetic, his person athletic and exceedingly handsome. Amid the tumult and confusion of the contending parties the figure of the young prince, accomplished, gracious, and good-humoured, stood out as an obvious object for popular admiration.

Despite his English mother, possibly even because of her and his experience of the meddling imperious character of this sister of Henry VIII, the young King leaned to the French faction, and was determined to seek a princess of the royal House of France for his wife.

He married first Magdalene, daughter of François I, but the young and consumptive princess died soon after her arrival in Scotland, and James V contracted a second marriage with Mary, daughter of the Duke of Guise and widow of the Duc de Longueville, by whom she had a son, the then reigning Duke.

The House of Guise (comprising the rulers of Lorraine) was, in the ability of its members, their conspicuous gifts of courage and bold statecraft, one of the most remarkable in Europe. But this alliance with a family, restless, intriguing, arrogant, not royal yet near the throne, and avid of regal honours, was not to prove fortunate for the House of Stewart.

The first throes of the Reformation, which were for so many years to convulse Europe, were already beginning to be felt in Scotland. James V was not credited with being an ardent supporter of the ancient Faith, and his uncle, Henry VIII, tempted him frequently with alluring promises to declare his independence of the Papal See. The Scottish King found, however, that his main task was that of his predecessor, a struggle with the overgrown power of the turbulent nobility, and in this effort he required the help of the clergy. The priests so far gained an influence over James as to bring about a rupture with England, which culminated in the Scottish King's refusal to meet his uncle at York in the autumn of 1541. Henry intended to kidnap his nephew and James suspected the plot.

Stung by this personal slight, as he termed it, the English King refused to listen to any attempt at a reconciliation and

war was declared between England and Scotland in July, 1542. James rallied two armies to meet the Duke of Norfolk, who was invading his kingdom at the head of the English forces.

The first was so mutinous that the King was forced to disband it. The second expedition marched to Solway Moss where, discontented and rebellious, it fell into confusion and was easily defeated by a few hundred English borderers.

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James V was at Stirling when the news of the shameful rout reached him. His mind had for long been forlorn and overcast, his body weakened by his continued anxiety and trouble and he was in no condition to withstand the shock of this disaster. He saw in Solway Moss a repetition of Flodden Field—a severer blow inflicted by the same hand. Personally brave, gay and brilliant in prosperity, he had not the resilience of spirit and the stern moral courage required to meet defeat; he was, besides, surrounded by traitors and “ vexed by some unkindly medicine ”. He sank into a deep melancholy which was increased by the news that his Queen, then at Linlithgow, had borne him a daughter; her sons had died at birth.

Referring to the Crown of Scotland which had come into his family with the marriage of Margery Bruce, he muttered : “ It came with a lass (alas)! and it will go with a lass (alas)! ” The unhappy prince, dying of a broken heart, could not have believed it possible that the family of Stewart, then represented by an infant girl under the guardianship of a woman, could continue to hold a kingdom distracted by internal conflict and tormented by the meddlings of foreign politicians.

His punning prophecy, if indeed he ever made it, was not, to the letter, fulfilled. If his daughter, as unhappy as himself, did lose the Crown of her ancestors, her son was to be King of Scotland from his tenderest age and in his manhood to rule over the entire island. Probably James V, when on his melancholy deathbed would have found nothing so astonishing as this glimpse into the future, which would have shown his grandson sitting on the throne of his implacable enemy, Henry VIII, who had harried both him and his father to their deaths.

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Again Scotland was faced with a minority and a Regency. When Mary of Guise rose from childbed she found herself faced by what seemed a task not only bitter and difficult, but hopeless. She, a woman and a foreigner, had to contend with

the intrigues of the ambitious, greedy, and insatiable nobles who had broken her husband's heart, with the swell and turmoil of the divided Christian Church, with the ancient Faith battling bitterly with all its manifold resources against the crude violence of the new Faith, with the manifold plots and counterplots of unscrupulous foreign intriguers who thought to find their own advantage in fishing in the very troubled waters of Scotland.

Mary of Guise was a dauntless princess. We do not know if she regarded her charming husband with more than the vexed compassion commonly accorded by a high-spirited woman to a man whose character is not strong enough for his destiny, but at least, she accepted the heritage that he had left her with unfailing courage, and undertook to rule in the name of her infant daughter the kingdom that had admired, loved, rebelled against and murdered so many Stewart monarchs.

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Mary Stewart was proclaimed Queen six days after her father's death at Stirling. It was a bold gesture—one of confidence in the Divine Right of Kings, for, beyond what innate loyalty and chivalry she might evoke in Scottish hearts, the infant Queen had little on which she could rely in any effort to retain the precarious throne of her forefathers. The vexations and difficulties of the position of Mary of Guise were tediously increased by the fact that the descendants of Margaret Tudor by her second marriage with the Earl of Angus, the members of the great House of Hamilton (the head of whom afterwards bore the French title of Duke of Châtelherault) and the Earl of Lennox were claimants to the throne of Scotland. The latter was, though the second in rank, the more formidable claimant as he chose to consider James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, as illegitimate (since Arran had been born after his father's divorce), and possessed the more turbulent and forceful character. Nor had the tiresome confusion of the situation been improved by the afterfruits of the licentious life of James V; he had left six bastard children, legitimized by the Pope, who had given some of them Church benefices.

One of these, born of a long and passionate intrigue with the highborn Margaret, daughter of Lord Erskine, who was believed to have been the King's true love and who had since married a Douglas, a member of one of the proudest families of the new nobility, was the Lord James Stewart, then too

young to give any signs of his future ability. He had, in fact, inherited most of the talents of his father and grandfather, and possessed far more than their small share of prudence, judgment and discretion.

At the time of his father's death after Solway Moss he appeared to be safely disposed of in the Church, where he held the position of Prior of St. Andrews, but the shrewd judgment of Mary of Guise must have regarded him as well as Lennox and the Hamiltons as a potential danger.

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Mary of Lorraine was a very tall, elegant woman of great dignity and reserve in her deportment. She has been described as great-hearted, just and noble; her manners were austere and there was never any stain on her reputation. Either naturally cold or proudly controlled she, twice widowed, beset by numerous temptations, in a conspicuous position, and surrounded by enemies, never was tainted by serious suspicion of scandal.

Henry VIII at once offered the hand of his son, the future Edward VI, to the infant Queen, the daughter of the man whom he had harried to his death.

James Hamilton, Earl of Arran (afterwards Duke of Châtelherault), who held, by right of his royal blood, the position of Governor of Scotland, and who disputed with David Beaton, the Cardinal-Archbishop of St. Andrews, the principal authority of the realm, was for the English marriage. Arran had joined the Reformation and stood well with Henry VIII, with whom he even negotiated the possible marriage of his own son with the Princess Elizabeth.

The Protestant Regent, however, was timid, irresolute, inexperienced, and incapable of holding his own. He was soon rivalled, if not displaced in all but nominal power by Cardinal Beaton, who had been an able minister under James V. This adroit churchman refused to be a tool of Henry VIII and supported the Queen Mother in her resistance to any attempts to secure the person of Mary under the excuse of educating her at the English Court as a bride for the King of England. Henry Tudor was not slow to conceive a deep hatred for the Scottish priest whom he could neither bribe nor threaten into obedience, and to plan his destruction as a prelude to the annexation, under more or less specious excuses, of the northern kingdom.

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It is possible that Henry might have succeeded in his

desires with regard to the marriage had not the insolence of his terms—i.e., the handing over of the Castles of Dumbarton, Edinburgh, St. Andrews, Stirling, Dunbar, and Tantallon, the cancellation of all treaties with France, the pledge of the Regent to enter into no foreign league without his consent,—amounted to a demand for the complete subjugation of Scotland and an acknowledgment of his supremacy as overlord. Even his supporters could not get these terms through the council. One of them, Sir George Douglas, declared “ —there is not so little a boy but he will hurl stones against any motion to give the government of this realm to the King of England ”.

Mary of Guise and Cardinal Beaton found, therefore, no difficulty in refusing the English match, though they must have viewed with dismay Henry Tudor's instant vengeance. When the Papal Nuncio to Scotland, Marco Grimani, wished to reach Edinburgh he was obliged to sail down the Loire to Nantes and gain the Scottish coast by skirting the west of Ireland because St. George's Channel was full of the menace of Henry's fleet, and this despite the Nuncio's escort of eight French men-of-war.

Some of Grimani's letters to Dandino, the Papal Nuncio to the Court of France, survive; they describe vividly the wretched state of Scotland during Mary's infancy: “ confusion, division, heresy, poverty ”, the Queen Dowager all but a prisoner, Cardinal Beaton shut up in his castle of St. Andrews, Arran, the nominal Regent, or “ Governor ”, powerless.

The safe arrival of Grimani with munitions and artillery from France further inflamed the exasperated temper of Henry VIII, and he declared war on Scotland, 1543.

Mary of Lorraine had, naturally, and not only from affection for her native land, but because she had experienced the pride, power, ferocity and duplicity of the English monarch, already turned to France for support and assistance. Failing the three children of Henry VIII, Mary, Elizabeth, Edward and their issue, Mary Stewart was the next heiress to the throne of England. She was, therefore, from her birth, of immense importance in the eyes of political Europe. Her maternal relations were both impressed and flattered by her high pretensions. Five of these were men of extraordinary talents and force of character, boundless ambition, and an inexhaustible capacity for intrigue. They contrived to torment

France for more than a quarter of a century, and almost subverted the throne of the Valois. They would undoubtedly have succeeded in doing this and in placing one of themselves upon the throne of St. Louis, had it not been for the staunch determination and implacable courage of the Italian Queen, Catherine de' Medici.

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Nine months after her father's melancholy death, Mary Stewart had been crowned Queen of Scotland at Stirling by Cardinal Beaton, September 9th, 1543. While Mary of Guise with notable courage and intelligence was undertaking the formidable labour of guarding her daughter's interests in Scotland, then affronting the English invasion, the infant Queen was sent to Inchmaholm, which, as it was a Priory on an island in the middle of the lonely lake of Menteith, was considered a safe refuge from the obvious perils of a country so lawless and so unsettled. Many attempts to abduct so valuable a prize were likely to be formed had they the least chance of success.

At Inchmaholm was a sanctuary arranged by nature and by man, where the young Queen was tenderly nurtured and jealously guarded. She had for companions children of her own age; among them were conspicuous four little girls, to be known afterwards to history and ballad as "The Queen's Maries"—Mary Seton, Mary Beaton (or Betoun), Mary Livingstone and Mary Fleming. The lonely fortress on the remote northern lake, often wrapped in mist, often beaten upon by wind and rain, must have been outwardly desolate. The thought of it has an air of sad enchantment and the setting of a fairy tale beyond the ruin of time. Comfort and luxury, however, surrounded the young Queen. Such gardens as it was possible to grow in the north, such flowers as would bloom in this windswept spot were set out for her delight. We hear of no illnesses nor childish troubles, the baby Queen was probably healthy and therefore lively. She suffered none of the gloom, severity, or wearisome state which has overshadowed the lives of so many royal children.

She must, then, from her earliest consciousness, have become accustomed to elegance, luxury, cheerful company, and all the symbols of the ancient religion.

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While she was thus safe in her water-surrounded fortress

the wrath of the English King fell on Scotland. On the third of May, 1544, men-of-war cast anchor off Leith and the Earl of Hertford, the King's brother-in-law (afterwards Duke of Somerset and Lord Protector), landed with an army of about sixteen thousand men and proceeded to put the inhabitants of Edinburgh to "fire and sword". Henry's savage instructions ran: "Sack, burn and slay . . . and extend like extremities and destructions to all towns and villages whereunto ye may reach conveniently." These orders, which the English Privy Council considered "wise, manly, and discreet", included special directions for the searching out of Cardinal Beaton and all his creatures, and the destruction of his town of St. Andrews. Hertford did his duty with cold-blooded efficiency, and after massacring all men, women and children within his reach, swept southward, where he wrought destruction along the coast, harrying and partially destroying Craigmillar Castle, Newbattle Abbey, Dalkeith, Leith, Haddington, Preston, and Dunbar, together with any Scots whom he could find.

During the whole of that and the following year (1544-1545), a succession of ferocious Border raids expressed the wrath of Henry. The rich and populous district between the Tweed and the Forth was turned into a hideous wilderness, the English generals, Wharton, Layton, and Evers, burnt, laid waste, and slaughtered without pause or pity.

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The bitter hatred provoked by these atrocities found vent in the fierce fight at Ancrum Moor, where the "Souters of Selkirk" after their victory, counted eight hundred red crosses of St. George among the slain; among them were the bodies of Sir Brian Layton and Sir Ralph Evers, the detested English captains.

Thus Henry VIII, whose formidable career was nearly at an end, ravaged Scotland in revenge for the refusal of the hand of Mary for his son. The little Queen, perhaps for greater protection, for greater convenience or comfort, was taken to the rocky citadel of Dumbarton on the Clyde, which had been for several centuries one of the most important seaports in Scotland. Here, as at Inchmaholm, she was protected from all the disturbances and vicissitudes with which her guardians had to contend. She had her childish companions, her zealous guardians, her gardens, her sunny galleries, and all the

elegance which the refined taste of her French mother could devise.

Mary of Guise, at bay before the English invasion, endeavouring to obtain help from the Pope, from Catholic Europe, had to face an appalling tragedy, perhaps engineered by Henry VIII, whose hatred had never ceased to pursue his courageous enemy, Cardinal Beaton. This priest was also loathed by the Reformers because of the energy with which he persecuted heresy, and the martyrdom of George Wishart (March 1st, 1546), served as a final pretext for one of those "murder bonds" too common in the history of Scotland.

Early in the morning of May 29th, 1546, a band of conspirators made themselves masters of the Castle of St. Andrews, dragged the old man from his bedchamber and, regardless of his entreaties, murdered him. After mutilating the body, clothing it in priestly vestments and hanging it over the Castle wall, the murderers took possession of the formidable fortress. A curious detail of this crime, related by John Knox, is that the murderers brought a portable grate of live fire with which to burn down the victim's door.

It is impossible to judge how much of the inspiration of this murder was due to Henry Tudor and how much to the zeal of the Reformers, but it is certain that among the fanatic Protestants who were suspected of having a hand in the murder or of approving that action was John Knox, hereafter to be so prominent in the history of Mary Stewart, and who took up his residence with the murderers of the Cardinal when they fortified themselves in the Castle of St. Andrews and defied all authority. This association with murderers, Knox afterwards declared, was done under pressure—he had no other retreat.

This assassination of a Cardinal made a considerable stir in Europe; it was the first of the many political murders that were to mark the disastrous reign of Mary Stewart.

Lord Arran, nominal Regent of Scotland, made ineffectual attempts to bring the assassins to justice; the murder of Beaton was a sacrilege and neither Mass nor Matins could be said in Scotland until the Cardinal had been revenged. Henry VIII, as almost his last act of mischief, encouraged and aided the bandits ensconced in St. Andrews, which held out for a year, until the Queen Dowager, helped by the Guise brothers,

succeeded in procuring the assistance of a French fleet of twenty-one galleys under the command of Admiral Leo Strozzi. Arran invaded the Castle by land and after a fierce resistance the garrison surrendered.

All the prisoners were not, curiously enough, executed, many were sent to work on the French galleys. Among them was the indomitable John Knox, who endured the misery of slavery with a ferocious patience and a zealous hope in the future.

In 1547 King Henry VIII died and was succeeded by his only son, Edward VI, whose Regent, Somerset, the young King's uncle, continued the policy of the previous reign.

A few months later an Act was passed by the Privy Council of Scotland commanding the issue of a small coin which was to bear the image of the Queen. This little penny, made of base metal, is the earliest known attempt at a likeness of Mary Stewart. Such worn specimens of this Scotch penny as remain show only a crude representation of an infant face seen in full with bare neck and arched brows.

In this same year died François I, father of the frail Magdalene who had been the first wife of James V. He was succeeded by Henry II, who was married to Catherine, daughter of the great merchant princes of Florence—the Medici.

Negotiations for the English marriage were again renewed, but Somerset's terms were little less harsh than those of Henry VIII, and preparations were made for a further appeal to arms. Among the English force of twenty-eight thousand which England mustered under the command of Somerset were two thousand Irish, "the wildest and most savage" that could be got, such as had been under the command of that unstable opportunist, Lord Lennox, in the former Border raids. On the other hand the Fiery Cross roused thirty thousand men to meet the invaders.

On the 4th September, 1547, the armies met at Pinkie Cleugh near Musselburgh. After a savage struggle of five hours the Scotch ranks broke; fourteen thousand were reported slain, many were drowned in the Esk, and the remnant was driven nearly to the gates of Edinburgh.

Lack of supplies and intrigues at home compelled Somerset to return to London and it was, therefore, impossible for him to follow up his victory.

The Queen Dowager was, however, faced by the prospect of another invasion on the western border led by Wharton and Matthew Stewart, Lord Lennox, who, disappointed of the Regency, had joined the English some while before.

Under these difficult and, as it might well have seemed, desperate circumstances, Mary of Guise affianced her daughter to the then nearly six years old son of Henri II and Catherine de' Medici, François the Dauphin. It was part of the arrangement that the young Queen of Scotland should be sent to France and educated with the Royal children and placed under the care of her maternal grandmother, Antoinette de Bourbon, Duchess of Guise. On the 24th June, 1548, the Estates sanctioned the marriage.

Shrewd, intelligent, and high-spirited as Mary of Guise undoubtedly was, she does not seem in this most important circumstance to have acted with foresight or judgment. Even if she disliked Scotland and the Scots, even if she felt no loyalty towards her husband's family, no sense of obligation towards the line which her daughter represented, even if she believed that she could conscientiously offer Scotland to France as a province, she should surely have been able to foresee the insuperable difficulties attendant on such a project. How could a kingdom which had proved too unruly for the considerable powers of a line of gifted, bold, and popular kings, be governed by a young woman who would be the Queen Consort of France as well as Queen Regnant of Scotland? And how could the heiress of the Stewarts, taken away from her country as an infant and brought up in a foreign land, to which she was already through heredity and surroundings predisposed, come to regard her country and her people with patriotic affection and sympathetic understanding?

We do not know if Mary of Guise and her advisers asked themselves these questions, but they might surely have seen obvious dangers in the course they were determined to pursue. They ignored all perils ahead and took these two daring steps —first, that of betrothing the Queen to a youth who must in due course become King of France, and who would in that event claim Scotland as his wife's appanage, and second, that of severing all connection between the young Queen herself and her native country, and this despite the watchful eye of England across the border, the potential dangers of the Lennox and

Hamilton claims, the possibility of trouble from the illegitimate children of James V.

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It may well have been, however, that Mary of Guise, though dauntless, was secretly in despair, and, after the murder of Cardinal Beaton, saw little hope for her daughter's crown. She did not know when one of the terrible English invasions might be successful, both in entirely over-running Scotland and in seizing the person of the Queen, and so, perhaps believing Scotland lost, she thought it best to secure the Crown of France and, at least, safely to place her treasure among her own people, away from the violence and treachery of the English that might penetrate even the fastnesses of Inchmaholm or Dumbarton.

Admiral Villegaignon with four galleys was anchored at Leith; by rounding the coast of Sunderland and Caithness, he gained the Clyde. Mary of Guise received the French at Dumbarton Castle and gave her little daughter into the charge of M. de Brézé. Two Scots Lords, Livingstone and Erskine, formed part of her retinue and the four Maries sailed with the little Queen. Escaping English men-of-war and storms the French vessels reached Roscoff, near Brest, on the 13th August, 1548. A pretty story relates that the tiny foot of the royal child was traced on the rock at Roscoff and a chapel, dedicated to Saint Ninian, raised over the spot. The desolate ruins of this building were standing fifty years ago.

Henri II gave orders that all his subjects were to receive Mary in almost royal state. "Reinette" was the charming name he gave her, and a mark of respect offered to the child was the release of all criminals from whatever town she passed through on her way from the coast to that royal palace at St. Germain-en-Laye which was to be in the future a refuge for the last of her direct descendants to wear a crown.

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Her grandmother, Antoinette de Bourbon, the Duchess of Guise, met the royal child on her arrival in France. This noble lady possessed those austere qualities which are commonly known as the domestic virtues; she was severe, narrow-minded, conventional, setting great store on correct deportment, propriety, and respectability—it was probably her training which had brought her daughter, the Dowager Queen of Scotland, unscathed through the vicissitudes of a difficult life. Not the most malignant tongue of a scandalous Court had ever been able to

say anything against the honour of either Antoinette de Bourbon or her daughter, Mary of Lorraine.

From the pen of this God-fearing lady, who devoted her time and her money to good works, and who appeared somewhat ostentatiously at Court in a serge gown and who prided herself on standing apart from all the frivolities, follies, and gaieties of Paris, we have the earliest picture of one who was to be so often and so variously described.

The Duchess of Guise wrote to her eldest son that "our little Queen is the prettiest and best that you have ever seen of anyone of her age". The affectionate grandmother, who seems to have been an accurate observer, finishes the picture of her precious charge in these words : " She is brown, and her complexion is clear and beautiful. When she has a little filled out she will certainly be a charming little girl. Her skin is very white, the lower part of the face delightfully pretty; the eyes are small and a little deep-set, the face a little long. She has such grace and assurance that she pleases anyone."

This description agrees with the earliest portraits of Mary Stewart. In this first known comment on her personality we see already the emphasis on her charm, grace, and self-assurance which were more notable than her actual prettiness.

Mary's early life in France has often been misrepresented. She has been carelessly described as having been under the care of Catherine de' Medici, who has been shown as a corrupt and wicked woman, under whose cynical influence the child could learn nothing that was good. This is a mistaken point of view, for at the period in which Mary Stewart went to France the character of Catherine de' Medici was unknown to everyone. She was effaced, in the background, the wife of the King and the mother of four sons and three daughters, indeed, but completely eclipsed by the royal mistress, Diane de Poictiers. Nor did the little Queen of Scotland at first come much in contact with her future mother-in-law.

It was on the princely estates of the House of Guise at Joinville that Mary's education, already begun in Scotland, was continued. The establishment of Claude, Duc de Guise, "was like a monastery than the Court of a great Prince" and his wife carried her austerities so far as to place her own coffin in the gallery through which she had to pass to her chapel. This stern and melancholy sense of the brevity of mortal life was

highly developed among many sensitive people in this age of corruption, violence, and treachery. An almost desperate submission to God and His supposed will revealed a nervous terror both of the known dangers of earthly life and the imagined horrors of Hell.

Claude de Guise and his wife had founded a Benedictine monastery at Joinville and the Duchess was herself an affiliated member of the Orders of the Dominicans, the Cistercians, and the Carmelites. As might have been expected this lady's household was conducted on sober lines of decorum and economy, and much of her time was spent in that charity towards the poor and sick that was such a popular virtue of the period. Nor was the devotional atmosphere of Joinville the only religious influence brought to bear on the young Queen; three of her mother's sisters were Abbesses of convents notable in the Church of France, those of St. Pierre at Rheims, at Fontevrault, burial place of Richard I, and at Formontier, and Mary spent much of her time in visits to these aristocratic nuns.

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For a time she was educated in a convent with the King's daughters, Elizabeth, Margaret, and Claude, and, excitable and impressionable, showed signs of becoming too religious-minded; it was not the intention of the Guises that the Queen of Scotland and the future Queen of France should become a nun. She was, therefore, removed from the convent and brought up under the direct influence of the Guises, her education being supervised by her uncle, the Cardinal de Lorraine; her grandfather, Claude, Duc de Guise, died in 1554 when Mary had been under his care for six years.

If, from the women of her mother's House, Mary Stewart learned piety, fine breeding, good works and a deep devotion to the Church of Rome, from her maternal uncles she learned pride, shrewdness, some scholarship, and the arts of the politicians.

As is usual with little princesses she received from all a generous share of praise; it was agreed by everyone that the royal girl developed the most attractive qualities. She was candid and sincere, courteous and sympathetic, gay and animated, and all she did was gracious and charming. She had inherited her father's and her grandfather's passionate love of learning and the arts. She was eager to learn all that was taught her, her quick intelligence found no difficulty even in abstruse studies,

she could express herself with emphasis and ease on paper or by speech. Though never melancholy, moody, or sulky, she was often serious and reserved. No one accused her of frivolity or idleness. That she was talented, indeed, gifted and precocious there can be no doubt, but it is difficult to accept some of the tales told of her early youth.

It is said, for instance, that when she was not quite ten years old she made a Latin oration before the King and Court which astonished and delighted everyone, and that, at the same tender age, she wrote poetry which was praised by Brantôme and Ronsard who, though they were both professional flatterers, must, one would think, have had some excuse for their adulation.

It is at least certain that she was regarded as an accomplished and well-trained child; she could ride well, dance gracefully, was skilful at embroidery, spoke French and Italian and knew something of music.

In the Bibliothèque Nationale is a little copy-book written by Mary between her twelfth and thirteenth year; the neatly written quotations from Plato, Cicero, and Erasmus give no hint as to the character of the little scholar, and the letters to her fellow students Elizabeth de Valois, afterwards Queen of Spain, to Claude de Valois, afterwards Duchess de Lorraine, and to her uncle, the second Duc de Guise, reflect nothing but the pious precepts of her teachers and the devotional commonplaces so familiar to her from her earliest childhood.

The little book shows that Mary was fairly well grounded in classical learning, and had been taught to consider that it was not unbecoming for a woman to dabble in scholarship. Even on these points, however, one cannot be certain that the childish writer really reveals herself, for too often, in the early efforts of royalty, sentiment and learning alike are taken down, a mere dictation, from the lips of the teacher, in this case probably M. de Saint Etienne, Latin preceptor to Elizabeth de Valois, who is thought to have taught the classics to the little Queen.

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During the first years of Mary's residence in France, Henri II offered Arran the French Duchy of Châtelherault in exchange for the dubious honour of the Scotch Regency. This was accepted, no doubt with relief, by the nervous and incapable Governor of Scotland, and Mary of Guise took his place as Regent for her daughter. She was, at least, as able as anyone

who could have been chosen, and the only person whose loyalty to the Queen was unquestioned.

In May, 1550, Mary of Guise sailed to France on a visit to her daughter in galleys sent to Leith by Henri II. In this absence from Scotland at a time so disturbed and difficult, the Queen Dowager consulted more her affections than her interests. Though a peace had been patched up between England, France, and Scotland in the March of that year, the northern kingdom was in a state of confusion and smouldering rebellion, the bitter religious questions had reached no manner of settlement, and the withdrawal of Mary of Guise meant that there was none to represent loyally the cause of these two foreign women whose every action seemed to divorce them from the realm over which they reigned.

The French visit was at first, however, a brief period of happiness for the Lorraine princess; she was received with royal honours and eagerly welcomed by her noble and proud kinsfolk of the House of Guise.

Her delight in the budding graces and wise airs of her little daughter was soon overcast by the sudden death of the son, the Duc de Longueville, from whom she had parted in his infancy, and the discovery of an alleged plot to poison the infant Queen.

This affair is lost in obscurity, but it appears that one Robert Stewart, who was afterwards executed for shooting the Constable de Montmorenci in the back at the battle of St. Denis (1567), was arrested on suspicion of a design to murder Mary and possibly her uncles. If he was tried and acquitted, if he escaped from prison we do not know, nor is it proved whether he was or was not an agent of any particular faction or sect.

Mary of Guise was a year and four months in France, during which time she not only concerned herself with her daughter's education, but used her considerable influence at the Court of Henri II to defeat English schemes and secure the continuation of "the Auld Alliance". She believed, and had helped teach the little Queen to believe, that France was such a powerful friend and staunch protector of Scotland, that neither the English nor the heretic need be greatly feared.

Her peace of mind was, despite this confidence, distracted by news from the north. Lord James Stewart, Mary's half-brother, and his party had gained the upper hand during the

Regent's absence and, with a far-sighted wisdom beyond Mary of Guise, had opened friendly relations both with England and the Reformers, undoubtedly performing good service to their country by placating the formidable foe on the border and endeavouring to consolidate the warring Faiths at home.

Mary of Guise took leave for ever of her daughter and returned to Scotland by way of England; she landed at Portsmouth and proceeded to London, where she was received with royal honours by the learned and philosophic King, that invalid boy who had at one time been proposed as a husband for Mary Stewart, and who was as precocious, as extolled, as sickly as the Dauphin to whom she had been finally given.

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It was November, 1551, when the Queen Dowager was at the Court of London; Edward Seymour who, as Earl of Hertford, had sacked the Scottish coasts, and as Duke of Somerset had gained the victory at Pinkie Cleugh, lay in the Tower awaiting death on the block, where he had formerly sent his brother, Thomas, Lord Seymour of Sudely. Somerset was a strong man but Northumberland, then in power, was a stronger, and had for a moment, ascendancy over the thirteen-year-old King, who so coldly signed the death warrants for both his uncles and noted in his diary, January 22nd, 1552 : "The Duke of Somerset had his head cut off on Tower Hill between eight and nine o'clock in the morning."

We do not know what impression the son of Henry VIII made on Mary of Guise, probably she disliked the delicate little Puritan who was as fanatic in his beliefs as she was in her own. Among his chaplains was John Knox, whom English influence had rescued from the French galleys, and the Queen Dowager cannot have been gratified to learn of this proximity to the English throne of the "black Protestant" who had lodged with the murderers of Cardinal Beaton and the rebels who had defied authority from the stronghold of St. Andrews.

It does not appear that Mary of Guise met the Princess Elizabeth Tudor who was to be of such supreme importance in her daughter's life.

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This girl whose mother had been beheaded as guilty of adultery and incest and who had been declared illegitimate by Act of Parliament, was at the time of Mary of Guise's visit, eighteen years of age. Her childhood had not been happy,

she had lived in peril, under constant suspicion and without state, even, on occasion, lacking those personal luxuries that had always been so lavishly bestowed on Mary Stewart. Lady Bryan, her governess when she was in captivity at Hunsdon, had written to Thomas Cromwell begging for clothes for the child who had neither "gown nor kirtle, nor petticoat, nor no manner of linen, nor smocks, nor kerchiefs, nor vails, nor body stichets, nor handkerchiefs, nor sleeves, nor mufflers, nor biggens".

This Princess, born to such a dark destiny, as it seemed, and in a position so overshadowed and ambiguous, was not without her flatterers, who describe her as more than the equal of Mary Stewart in learning and accomplishments. She, too, had her Greek and Latin, her handsome playing on the lute, her sweet singing, her study of the ancients, her light step in the dance, her "modest gravity, excellent wit, royal soul and happy memory". Nor had her pale beauty been unremarked; Lord Seymour, fourth husband of Catherine Parr, had, before his brother hurried him to Tower Hill, paid a court to the young Princess which was conducted with a passion not due wholly to ambition.

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While Mary of Guise returned to Scotland to resume her hopeless task of reducing that kingdom to peace and obedience, her daughter continued her education in the stately, orderly devotional atmosphere of the Guise's household, where her tranquillity could have been little disturbed by any echoes of the troubles with which her gallant mother had to contend.

In February, 1553, the Cardinal wrote to his sister :

"Your daughter has grown much taller and she daily improves in goodness and virtue, in beauty and intelligence. She could not possibly make greater progress than she does in all that is excellent and of good reputation. So much does the King enjoy her society that he frequently spends an hour in conversing with her. This is a great pleasure to him, for she talks as well and sensibly as if she were a woman of five and twenty. You may be assured that in her you have a daughter who will be the greatest comfort to you."

The next sentence strikes a warning note. The penetrating eye of His Eminence had already observed much of the royal Stewart spirit in his niece.

"In the settlement of her establishment," he wrote, "it is my
B*

opinion that there should not be anything which is either superfluous or mean, for meanness is a thing which of all others she hates most in the world."

He also noted that

"her spirit is so high that she lets her annoyance be very plainly visible if she be unworthily treated". * * * *

A letter that the little Queen wrote to her mother in the following year, 1554, the year of her grandfather's death, is still extant. It is gracefully written but bears no trace of character, being but a conventional expression of piety; she had heard that the Scottish rebels had been put down and that all the princes and great lords had returned to the Queen Regent. She writes that she is staying at Mcudon with Madame her grandmother, in order to keep the feast of Easter, and that she is going to take the Sacrament, and she utters a wish that after events make seem tragic enough: "I pray to God very humbly to give me grace that I may make a good beginning."

It was in the early part of this year that Mary had been allowed a separate establishment of her own. Everyone who saw the young Queen of Scotland at this period spoke in her praise. Margaret of Savoy, François d'Orléans, the Princess of Ferrara, the formidable Royal mistress, Diane de Poictiers, Mary Tudor's ambassadors, the Bishop of Ely, and Lord Montague, the Spanish Ambassador, Capello, all testify to her honesty, her goodness, her discretion, her conversation, her simplicity and yet her air of prudence and experience. She was considered by all "the best and prettiest little Queen in the world".

Her future husband was her constant playmate, and the boy and girl seemed to have enjoyed a genuine friendship. The Spanish Ambassador noted that he saw them withdrawn by themselves, whispering together, apart from the others, their little confidences.

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It is possible to attach too much importance to these laudations of the youthful Mary Stewart. It is usual for princes and princesses to be praised and admired, to have their poets and their flatterers, and this was in France an age of fantastical poetical chivalry. Ardent praise of women, an affected attitude of amazed adoration towards femininity found exaggerated

expression in poem and song though it is not easy to discover in the real life of the times any peculiar consideration for feminine weakness or handicap, both seeming to have been exploited quite unscrupulously by the majority of men.

The school of Pierre Ronsard, and his followers "the Pleiades", affected the courtly conceit of strained hyperbole which soon becomes formal and conventional.

Mary's eyes "are lodgings for love", and the eyes of Margaret Valois, her sister-in-law, are "so brilliant that it is unnecessary to have torches to dance by".

From praises such as these it is difficult to arrive at any just estimate of the charms of the ladies in question. Nor are we greatly helped by portraits, which too often give us an impression of dismal disillusion.

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When Mary had been in France some years the little Scotch coin which contained her earliest portrait was re-issued, and when she was nine years old her likeness was drawn in crayon—black and red—by a French artist. This precious drawing forms part of a collection of crayon sketches which are now at Chantilly. An inscription in contemporary handwriting informs us that it is a portrait of Mary Queen of Scots, at the age of nine years and six months, taken in the year 1552 in the month of July. There is nothing notable or attractive in this representation of one who was to be such a famous beauty. The face is seen three-quarters, the lips are pinched, the eyes small and unshaded, the nose heavy, the forehead disproportionately high and broad, and this ungainly lack of proportion is emphasized by the ugly custom of dressing a child of nine in the stiff attire of a grown woman. The large head, natural to this age, is further increased in size by the severe dressing of the hair, which is drawn back under a stiff jewelled cap, and the thin, undeveloped body looks displeasing in a tight-fitting bodice stiffly outlined by embroidery. The drawing, however, appears to be a likeness, there is no attempt at idealization and as such it is of priceless value. It is not possible to learn anything of Mary's colouring from this sketch, for only red and black chalks have been employed—the hair is touched in in black crayon, the jewels are in red lines. These are very rich and consist of two rows round the cap, an earring, a necklace looped from the bodice, and a long gem pendant from a fine chain which appears to be an immense *baroque* pearl. These are

probably French Crown jewels; the painters of this period copied famous ornaments with great accuracy.

John Achesoun, or Atkinson, master-monier, goldsmith and burgess of the Cannon Gate, the Scotch medallist, was in Paris in 1553, where he struck a coin with a portrait of Mary Stewart. This shows the bust of the Queen in profile to the right, crowned. The nose is heavy, like that of the Chantilly drawing, the hair falls down naturally at the back of the head.

In the same year Achesoun struck a second coin showing the Queen in profile to the left and without a crown. The features are still slightly heavy and unformed, the neck is much longer and thinner. The hair is dragged back in unbecoming fashion and the round, prominent forehead is most noticeable. Only one example of this coin, which, perhaps, was merely a pattern, exists and that is at present in the British Museum.

As far as these coins and the drawing at Chantilly, the only contemporary likeness of Mary in her extreme youth that we possess, go, they do not confirm the reports of her beauty and charm given so lavishly by her contemporaries. Mary does not appear particularly robust in the Chantilly drawing and it may be questioned whether she ever was so, but the Cardinal, her uncle, writing to his sister, assured her that reports as to her daughter's delicacy of health were false. She suffered, he admits, from occasional faintness, brought on by gluttony and the wrong food; the same self-indulgence had threatened the health of Elizabeth Tudor who had, at Hunsdon, helped herself too freely to the good fare so lavishly displayed on the board of Estate. It is not easy to understand, however, how overfeeding could have caused faintness, and obviously the Cardinal was a little mistaken in his diagnosis.

In 1557 Henri II sent an embassy to the Estates of Scotland, inviting them to send representatives to the wedding of their Queen. Accordingly Envoys whose especial duties were to see that the liberties of Scotland were duly protected were dispatched to France. On April 19th, 1558, the formal Act of betrothal took place in the great hall of the Palace of the Louvre, and on the following Sunday, the 24th of April, the ambition of the great House of Guise was gratified by the marriage of their niece to the Dauphin of France in the Cathedral of Notre Dame at Paris.

The pomp of these springtide nuptials was elaborate and costly. Mary, richly adorned with jewels and clad in the azure and silver of the lilyed field of France, was led to the altar by King Henri and the Duc de Guise. The King and Queen of Navarre were present at the gorgeous ceremony and the brilliancy of the spectacle was added to by the presence of the Papal Legate, Cardinal Trivulzo (who had brought the necessary dispensation from His Holiness, bride and bridegroom being related in the fourth degree), the Cardinals of Guise, Lorraine, Bourbon, Lens, Meudon and Lenoncourt, the Bishop of Paris, and all the nobility of France.

The Guise family, whose especial triumph this was, had been for some years of such ambition, splendour, and pretensions, as to be a potential peril to the House of Valois, which had, however, flattered and employed them.

Claude de Guise, Mary's maternal grandfather, had been a brilliant and successful soldier who, by his ferocities against the Protestants, had been named "The Butcher of Alsace", though the Roman Catholics found him a humble, devout, and charitable man. Two of his sons, Mary's uncles and guardians, were among the most conspicuous and gifted men in Europe. François, the second Duke of Guise, bore the titles—all of which he rendered famous—of Prince de Joinville, Duc D'Aumale, Marquis de Mayenne, Governor of Dauphiné, Lieutenant-General of the Kingdom, of which he had been virtually for many years, under indolent and indifferent Kings, the ruler. His defence of Metz in 1552-1553, had brought him almost unparalleled praise and honour, and he had consolidated this flashing success by re-taking Calais, the last English possession in France, four years later.

This popular hero had the manly virtues of candour and generosity, courage and sincerity; to his friends he was courteous and affectionate, to his enemies harsh and intolerant; he was a fanatic Romanist and as such feared and loathed by the Protestants. This magnificent Prince was austere in his private life, strict towards others, proud, ambitious, and a lover of splendour and pomp; he had two sons, Henri and Louis, the first his heir, the other destined for the Church, both still youthful, but showing already that they possessed the family abilities, arrogance, and lofty aspirations.

His brother Charles, Cardinal of Lorraine, who had been an Archbishop of Rheims at the age of fourteen and created

Cardinal in 1547, had been directly the governor and tutor of Mary.

The priest was not as much admired as the soldier—Brantôme, who flattered both of them, says of the Cardinal, “ Il n'avait pas l'ame si pure ” (as his brother). He was, however, an elegant scholar, eloquent, persuasive, shrewd, and a brilliant diplomat. He was also a good administrator of his own estates at Joinville where he drained morasses and laid out pastures and gardens. At Rheims, his Archbispopric, he built a university, a college, a seminary, and a convent. His faults were timidity, suspicion, and, perhaps, cowardice. He kept with unusual decorum the outward observances of the Faith he held, but his private life was generally supposed to be profoundly licentious; one of the ugliest slanders ever brought against Mary Stewart accused her uncle of being her lover. It was uttered by her third husband. At the time of her first marriage the Cardinal was thirty-four years of age, one year younger than the Duc de Guise, of a languid, agreeable appearance, winning manners and fascinating address. He has been accused of being a hypocrite in religion, and in every detail of his character as false as he was able. There could be no doubt as to his zeal, real or assumed, for the Church of Rome; he introduced the Inquisition into France and became Grand Inquisitor.

The Cardinal of Lorraine was credited with the desire to be Pope. It was said of him that when he astonished and disgusted His Holiness by the rapacity with which he engorged See after See and Benefice after Benefice, he remarked: “ I would resign them all for one bishopric—that of Rome.” Yet when his chance came after the death of Paul IV in 1559, he is said to have refused it, possibly from timidity.

Claude de Guise, Mary's grandfather, had been suspected of designs on the crown, and there can be little doubt that by this marriage of their niece to the future King of France the Guise brothers did hope, if not to place one of their own family directly upon the throne, at least to be directly the power behind the throne.

Whatever debate there might be as to their qualities there could be none as to their intentions.

This powerful family stood not merely for their own personal advancement but for that of the ancient Faith. They were pledged, publicly and privately, to suppress, by every possible means, the growth of heresy. Though they shared to the full

the shifting, tortuous, subtle, and underhand qualities of their contemporaries, they were at least both staunch in this—their determination to uphold at all costs and by every means the supremacy of the Church of Rome. The Duc de Guise, at least, seems to have been sincerely religious, though the Cardinal may have had the philosophic mind that is above creeds.

These formidable brothers were, therefore, regarded with well founded fear and hatred by all the followers of the Reformation, and something of the terrified loathing that the name of Guise inspired in every Protestant breast attached to their niece and pupil.

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The young Queen of Scotland had come directly under the influence of her uncle the Cardinal of Lorraine. This clever, subtle man must have had considerable effect on her character. She learnt more from him than elegance, courtesy, love of scholarship, an enthusiasm for the arts and for the dignity and sophistication of courtly life. She learnt also dislike and scorn for heretics and complete intolerance for all who did not belong to the ancient Faith, a belief in the Divine Right of Kings and in the efficacy of all those subterfuges, underground manœuvres, oblique intrigues, and delicate deceit which then in Europe went by the name of Macchiavellism.

The result of this training showed on the occasion of the young girl's marriage. While openly swearing to preserve the liberties of her country she gave her assent to a secret treaty whereby Scotland was handed over as an appanage to France. In this she acted, no doubt, as she was told, and according to her idea of right. It was too much to expect that a girl of her age should have the intelligence to see to what an embroiled tangle she was setting her hand in thus betraying one nation to another. She had not been brought up to feel that patriotic enthusiasm, that instinctive sympathy with her people which rendered Queen Elizabeth so popular and so successful in England. It might be that she felt herself more French than Scotch. Her native country she could remember but faintly and her mother's people had been a constant influence. However, the fact that she should, in her first political act, have lent herself so completely to the designs of her relatives, have agreed quite readily to such a tremendous decision as the complete betrayal of her father's heritage, and handed over to her boy husband so lightly and without any protest her native

land, does not, if she were beguiled by her relatives' arguments (as historians, by no means among her enemies, have remarked), show much of that precocious judgment and discretion with which she has been credited.

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She was either as light minded and shallow as any other young girl or she was already well-trained in political duplicity. In either case, she must have been intelligent enough to know that the Scotch deputies were being completely deceived, that their native liberties that they had come to France expressly to protect were being signed away secretly, and that, in all that openly sworn to in their presence, a lie was acted. It was no fine training in honour for the young Queen, and no good example of statecraft, either. Henri II showed himself a clumsy diplomat in extorting these secret treaties from his daughter-in-law, for he could never have enforced such terms from Scotland without a European war which he was in no condition to meet. The three secret documents that the bride signed were as foolish as they were vile. By the first Mary made over Scotland to the King of France in the event of her death without an heir. By the second, she gave him her kingdom as a pledge until the sum of one million pounds in gold, spent on her education and the defence of her realm should have been repaid, and, in the third paper she affirmed that the two others contained her true wishes, no matter what other deeds as regards the Succession might be executed by her under stress of circumstance.

Henri II, on his part, gave the bride a handsome dowry in the usufruct of the Duchy of Touraine and the Comté of Poitou, and the Scottish deputies, completely fooled into thinking that they had safeguarded the honour and interest of Scotland (they had obtained from Mary and her husband a formal recognition of Scottish independence) returned satisfied to Edinburgh. Among these commissioners was the Lord James Stewart, Mary's base-born brother; shrewd and keen-witted as he was, he did not suspect the audacious fraud that had been practised by Mary and her advisers.

The title of King of Scotland was conferred on the young François at the time of his marriage. He was only a few months older than his bride, sickly, and giving no signs of ability. Mary had been brought up with him and his brothers and sisters, and there seemed no question but that she regarded

him with tenderness and affection; that they were, however, as some chroniclers assert, in love in the full meaning of the word, seems unlikely, if not impossible. Their immaturity and his feeble health would seem to preclude anything stronger than a good-natured, half-compassionate friendliness on the part of the bride, and a wistful, romantic attachment on the part of the bridegroom.

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The first weeks of the marriage were spent at Villers-Cotterets near Soissons; the young husband was called to the camp at Amiens in September.

In the Bibliothèque Nationale is an exquisite drawing of Mary at the time of her marriage. The charm and distinction which had not been apparent in the earlier drawings is here obvious. It can scarcely be termed a beautiful face—the attraction lies in the elegance and sophistication, in the melancholy grace and the delicate air of breeding. The Queen-Dauphine is seen to the waist, the face in three-quarters; she wears the partlet or lawn chemise introduced by the prudery of Catherine de' Medici, which covers shoulders and bosom and finishes in a close ruffle under the neck. The tight bodice is looped with pearls, and there are pearls again at the base of the throat. The characteristics of the earlier portrait are here seen more clearly marked—the high forehead, the sleepy eyes, the thick, lashless lids, the long nose, slightly aquiline, firmly compressed lips (the lower a little sunk beneath the upper), the rounded chin, the long oval face. The dark hair is drawn back and passed round the back of the head in a plait behind a chaplet of jewels. The colouring is dark and the likeness to her father most marked.

The expression is difficult to read, it is reserved and melancholy, the eyes have a far-away, almost a furtive expression. The drawing is traditionally ascribed to "Janet" (François Clouet), or to Mary's own painter, Jehan à Court. It was copied many times, both as painting and miniature. In the "Book of Hours" of Catherine de' Medici, now in the Louvre, is a miniature of the young royal couple. The face of Mary is almost exactly like that of the drawing, but bolder in outline; François is plump and childish, dark, with coarsely modelled nose and mouth.

Pierre de Bourdeille, secular *abbé* of Brantôme, writing his gossipy, sugary, and frivolous memoirs at the end of his life and some time after the death of Mary, describes her at this

period from his memory in terms of eulogy which may or may not have been exaggerated. He praises her virtue, her beauty, her sweet civility and gracious worldliness. He could recall her, he says, "in the habit of the savages of her country", which piquantly enhanced her delicate and sophisticated charm. It has been supposed that this barbarous costume was some rough gown of wool and fur which had been sent Mary from Scotland for her to wear to amuse her companions at Court festivals; it could have borne no resemblance to the Highland dress with which we are familiar.

Brantôme remembered her also as "more agreeable, more beautiful, and more desirable than ever in rich and beautiful *parures* in the French or Spanish style or with her Italian bonnet". He also praises her beautiful white hands, her exquisite fingers, her pale skin. He says that she was painted in the wild Scots dress, but such a picture has never been found.

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The coins and medals struck to commemorate the marriage of Mary Stewart bear her likeness in profile. These resemble the drawings in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and help us to reconstruct, almost to every detail, the tall, graceful, exquisite and grave girl who was now Dauphine of France as well as Queen of Scotland. Only one life—that of the ailing and heartbroken Mary Tudor—stood between her and the throne of England, at least in the eyes of all the Roman Catholic world, who regarded Elizabeth Tudor, whose mother's marriage had never been recognized by any but the heretics, as illegitimate.

This third honour which seemed so near must have further stimulated and inflamed the ambitions of the House of Guise.

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There is not much material from which to reconstruct the life of Mary either during her childhood in France, passed under the care of her grandmother in a convent, or in the palaces of her uncle the Cardinal of Guise, or when as Dauphine of France she became a resident in the royal palaces. The accounts which describe her as indulging in a series of exotic gaieties and frivolous amusements seem overcoloured. It is more probable that her life was ceremonious, austere, often tedious. The greater part of her time must have been spent in learning lessons and accomplishments, and in being trained in the laborious routine of etiquette which wearied all the members of the royal family of France.

We do not know if she had any great affection for her grandmother or her uncles. She had her playmates in the Valois children, one of whom was now her husband, and she had many admirers who mostly, however, like Pierre Ronsard who had been her father's page at the time of his marriage to Mary of Guise, treated her with a ceremonious and distant adulation which could not have added much to the sum of her personal happiness.

Her amusements appear to have been, as indeed was fashionable among high-born ladies, of the more intellectual kind. She was fond of music and had a certain skill in this art. Probably the lute, the viol de gamba, and the spinet were among the instruments on which she performed. She could write verses, she knew the stately steps of the intricate Court dances, she could sing, she was fond of embroidery, at which she was very skilful, and delighted in costly and sumptuous clothes.

It must have seemed that such a princess, of such tact, refined and charming, joined to such winning manners and high-bred courtesy, would soon rule without dispute in a Court where precisely these gifts and qualities were most valued and praised. Of foreign wars or internal broils there could have been but faint echo in the splendid palaces where Mary lived; even of the tremendous force of the Reformation, slowly, despite the bitterest persecution, gathering in strength, she could have known but little; she must have heard merely of "rebels and heretics" who could and would be soon subdued and utterly wiped out. It is not likely that she gave the matter much thought, though she may have been concerned by the reports from Scotland of her mother's long struggle with the factious nobles, who were for the most part, turned to Protestantism.

The life to which Mary Stewart found herself introduced as a married princess of France was indescribably rich and sumptuous, the full flowering of a decadent civilization. Whatever the wrongs and suffering, the poverty and despair of the people may have been in this or other countries, the princes lived with every felicity that life can offer. Everything that formed this delicious existence, from the heavy buildings of brick and sculptured stone to the least vessel of cut crystal or agate was formal, rich, over-decorated, exquisitely wrought by loving labour and patient hands. There was scarcely an inch

of the rooms or the furniture that was not covered by carvings, paintings, gildings, which were often of an overwhelming heaviness and cumbered with a profusion of detail. Tapestries and embroideries, gorgeous panels, coloured glass and brocade added a further multitude of gorgeous detail to the already over-adorned apartments. The colours were harsh and crude, there were no half tints; gold and silver were freely used; garments and furniture were covered with intricate decoration.

The windows were tall but deeply mullioned and shrouded by massive curtains; the sunlight was excluded whenever possible, and the opulent, over massive chambers looked their best by the light of crystal lamps and wax tapers.

The gardens were also formal and stately and bore as little resemblance as possible to nature. Beds, sparsely set with flowers, were raised and protected by wattle fences; straight walks were sanded, there was great use made of stiff trellis, of close clipped hedge, of fencing; the geometrical knot garden was much admired. There was considerable use of pergolas, of summerhouses, of all manner of luxurious retreats against sun and rain. There were not many flowers—the lily, the rose, the violet, the primrose, the marigold, the carnation, the jonquil and the daffodil would almost complete the list of those that Mary Stewart could have found in her French pleasantries, and these were more valued for perfumes, for salads, and for medicinal properties than for their decorative qualities. Not many of them, as John Gerard wrote in his "Herbal" much later, were valued simply as "posies for the bosoms of the beautiful". Many years were to pass before fair women would be painted with their own hair falling about their shoulders set off by a single rose; in none of the portraits of Mary is there a flower.

The stiff and cumbersome dress then fashionable tortured the human figure out of all natural shape. The tight bodices, often interlined with buckram or stiffened with steel, flattened and suppressed the torso into a kitc-like form; the curve of the arms was concealed by rigid slashed and patterned sleeves, the movement of the legs hidden under monstrous farthingales or tightly pleated skirts, "vertugardines" and over-dresses, the gracious curve of neck and bust was hidden by ruffle and partlet, and the whole figure further disguised, too often, by an immense veil or cloak. On some occasions the costume became utterly fantastic, the designs of the various brocades and embroideries

in the material clashing with the heavily-set jewels of which far too large a quantity was worn.

The hair was brushed unbecomingly back from high foreheads—which seem to have been much admired—was dyed, crimped, and often concealed under a wig.¹ The charms most praised seem, if we may judge from the portraits of women who were reigning beauties of that period, to have been of a wan, almost haggard type, the white iris or privet bud manner of loveliness. The long oval, colourless faces, small features, with no eyebrows or lashes (the latter, perhaps, being plucked or shaved), the hair concealed as much as possible, the lips narrow and the fingers long and pale.

This type of pallid and over-refined beauty, ethereal or anaemic, according to the mood of the spectator, was piquantly emphasized by the gross over-exaggeration, the splendour of the gaudy dresses.

The male costume was equally fantastic and unbecoming. The French cavaliers who delighted to do homage to the young bride of their future King were attired in the extreme of that style which, derived from Italy, was exaggerated in Paris, from whence it set the fashion to the whole of Europe. Padded, pinched, quilted doublets, short, puffed, slashed breeches, cloaks stiff with braiding and embroidery, wired ruffles of lace or cambric stiffly framing the face, threw the trunk out of all proportion to the cropped head and the legs, covered from the middle of the thigh with the closest possible fitting hose. Heavy, fantastic jewellery, on some occasions damasked and gilded or blued armour, embroidered belt and baldric, gold chains, brooches, sashes, tags, and points of all descriptions, further elaborated this sumptuous and grotesque attire. The displeasing effect was completed either by a small cap worn at one side of the shaven head and adorned by a feather and a brooch or a string of jewels, or even more fantastically by a high hat of crumpled velvet poised also over one ear and struck with a small feather at the summit; wigs, flat crowns of false hair, were worn, the men used paint, perfume and all manner of toilet devices.

The effect of this costume was to caricature the human figure. These *baroque* splendours left little of manly strength, beauty, or grace to even the young and comely, but all charm

¹ Wigs were items in Mary's wardrobe from the earliest years of her reign.

lies in custom and these beauties and gallants of the French Renaissance had no fault to find one with the other. It was left to a few sour satirists and bigot Puritans to make those usual comments on the follies of the day which are always unheeded by those who commit them.

Whatever the lack of knowledge and hygiene or medicine and the principles of real cleanliness, whatever disorder and filth there may have been in the life of the common people, these great ones lived exquisitely. There were baths and bathing, there were perfumes and unguents, there were washes and creams for hands and complexions, there were elaborate devices then, as there always has been, for the so-called beautifying of every portion of the human person.

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The commonest vessels these great ones owned were of rare and precious materials—gold and silver, agate, crystal, enamel, embossed, carved, and set with jewels.

The ceremonials of the Roman Catholic Church were as gorgeous as the daily life of the nobles. The cardinals, the bishops, the priests and their retinue formed a brilliant part of the pageantry of the Court. Every day Mary beheld her religion not only bowed to by the humble people but exalted by the splendour of the King and the nobles. Everything was heavy, rich, formal, sophisticated, artificial.

Pierre Ronsard (who found in Mary his Egeria) and the Pleiades had deliberately set themselves to create a literature that would celebrate this brittle and brilliant world. Anagram, conceit, conundrum, cypher, concealed meanings, quips and puns were fashionable and intensely admired. The catchwords of chivalry still remained. Men wore women's favours in their bonnets or on their breasts; there were still tournaments and tiltings and prizes for the victors. Romances of the exploits of knights in rescuing ladies were still read even by the most cynical. A wealth of classical knowledge which, passing from Italy was then coming to full flower in France and would soon bloom in England, had been incorporated into the heritage of the aristocrats. Familiar allusions to Greek fable and Roman deity were to be found side by side with invocations of Christian faith and symbol. The voluptuous figures of Venus, the stern features of Mars, and the rosy charms of Cupid and Adonis were familiar in picture, sculpture, engravings, on pottery, in cameos and jewels. Side by side with these were the ghastly

and popular emblems of mortality; one of François de Valois' presents to his bride was a fashionable watch in the form of a skull.

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Mary Queen of Scots seemed to be the fitting queen and goddess of such a world. She had been born into it, she had been trained by it; she stepped, as by right, on to the steps of the throne of the most cultured kingdom in Europe.

It would seem at first consideration of her case as if she might easily have been supremely successful. She had behind her that great family of Guise and the prestige of the Northern Kingdom which her mother was struggling to keep for her, and which she had given as so magnificent a marriage gift to her young husband, and the yet greater prestige of the other kingdom which she might yet proffer on the death of Mary Tudor. She had won also the affections and kindness of her father-in-law, the King of France, and she does not seem to have provoked the envy or dislike of one who was more powerful than the King of France—Diane de Poictiers, who had been his mistress since she was a woman of forty and he was a boy of eighteen.

It was this lady, cold, brilliant, cultured, patroness of art and letters, who summed up the spirit of the time and place in the impeccable elegance of her person.

We do not know how much the young Queen had been brought into contact with the powerful mistress. We know that Diane had spoken words of praise of her, of her beauty and her discretion (this last a quality which Diane de Poictiers, who had been for some years Duchess of Valentinois, valued highly). The careful decorum of Antoinette de Bourbon may even have concealed from the young girl the position that Diane de Poictiers held in the Court where she was uncrowned Queen. But it is more likely that Mary sensed and condoned the position of this woman who, at nearly sixty years of age, was undisputed arbiter of taste, fashion, and conduct, who possessed, and had so long possessed, such complete influence over the King. This royal favourite never gave the offence that some of her predecessors and successors in this post offered. In conduct she was as circumspect, as cultured and courteous as if she had indeed been Queen of France. She even boldly adopted the symbolism suggested by "Diane"—the crescent moon was her emblem. This, and the interlaced cypher "D"

and "H" for her own name and that of her royal lover, appears again and again, cold and emphatic among the fantastic adornments of the royal apartments.

This remarkable woman, who seemed to hold a position gratifying to the most boundless pride more by reason of her intellect than her sensuous beauty, remains immortal in the lovely statue by Jean Goujon, "*Diane Chasseresse*", which was designed for the fountain in the courtyard of her château at Anet. The long, smooth limbs, the placid mask of the face with the small, exact features, the inscrutable expression and the magnificent coronet of piled-up locks inlaid with pearls, represents the ideal woman of the French Renaissance—she of the white limbs, the pallid hair, straight features and impassive eyes who may be seen again and again in the canvases of Bronzino which adorned the galleries of the Valois princes.

There was much of this tutored elegance, this placid grace, this chill refinement in the youthful Mary Stewart. Diane de Poictiers may have much admired her and resolved to protect her, and possibly intended to continue her influence through the young Queen when her husband should ascend the throne. Diane de Poictiers, even at sixty years of age, had not done with the world, and she may have considered it possible that she would outlive her royal lover.

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There was, however, another personality at the Court of France which had been hitherto obscured and eclipsed and not very greatly regarded by anyone, but which was in time to defeat not only Mary but the great House of Guise. This was the young Queen's mother-in-law, Catherine de' Medici, the neglected wife of Henri II, despised because she came of noble though not of royal birth and had in her veins the blood of traders and moneylenders, and who was completely overshadowed not only in her husband's heart, but in the regard of the Court and nobility by Diane de Poictiers. The lot of the young Italian, married in her tenderest youth, had been even harder than that of most foreign Queens in a strange Court. She had been early orphaned and had been brought up by that Medici who became Pope Clement VII. Her personal charms were modest, her manners severe and prudish; she was a notable patron of art and letters, inheriting in a marked degree the tastes of her famous House, but in this direction, as in others, she had not been able to compete with

Diane de Poictiers. Both as Dauphine of France under the reign of François I, and as Queen of France when her husband had come to the throne she had been largely ignored, her extraordinary abilities had been undiscovered, and her avid zest for political intrigue had only been employed unobtrusively and in secret. No one seems to have noticed anything either commanding or sinister about this quiet figure in the background who gave to an unhappy marriage seven children, all of whom save two were to wear crowns.

It is probable that this Italian Queen disliked the little Mary Stewart from the moment that she landed in France, not from any personal reasons but because she was a protégée and, as Catherine would suspect, a tool of the House of Guise, in whom the astute Italian saw a potential menace to the House of Valois.

It has been said that Mary Stewart inflamed the hatred of the Florentine against her by a remark to the effect that while she, Mary Stewart, came of a line of Kings, Catherine de' Medici was but the descendant of traders.

This anecdote may not be true; it does not seem to bear out the stories of the discretion and courtesy of Mary Stewart at this age. Even if it is true it is more likely that the political significance of Mary and not any chance remark of a girl exasperated Catherine.

Be this as it may, it is generally agreed that there was considerable antipathy between the two Queens, that the elder did what she could—and no doubt this was considerable—to render life disagreeable for her son's wife. Catherine, during her long effacement by Diane de Poictiers, had yet contrived to indulge some of her native talents for intrigue. She had appeared to countenance the House of Guise, in order, no doubt, to beguile them by an appearance of friendship, of confidence, and she had secretly encouraged the Huguenots who were their deadliest enemies.

She must have longed for power and for an opportunity to display those gifts and that force of character of which she was so conscious and which she had been obliged to conceal under a false patience for so long. She could not, therefore, have viewed with equanimity the future accession of Mary Stewart to her husband's throne, knowing, as she would know, that it would mean the virtual rule of the House of Guise and the complete relegation of herself to the background.

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In the next two years death made a considerable difference in the position of the two Queens. In the November of the year 1558 that Mary Stewart was married, Mary Tudor died. Her sister, Elizabeth, who had passed so much of her youth, despised and neglected, in prison and in apprehension of death, was proclaimed Queen of England. This event alarmed and shocked Roman Catholic Europe. In the eyes of every member of the old Faith the divorce of Catherine of Aragon was not valid, the marriage of Anne Boleyn and Henry VIII was a farce, Elizabeth Tudor was illegitimate, and the true heiress to the throne of England and Ireland was Mary Stewart, Dauphine of France and Queen of Scotland.

Without hesitation, and acting probably on her own instinct as well as on the advice of her relatives and the King of France, Mary assumed, together with her husband, the arms and insignia of King and Queen of England and Ireland. The act was impetuous and ill-considered, it was impolitic for the Guise or the Valois to put forward such a claim unless prepared to back it by force of arms, and that they were not ready, even if they had been willing, to do. It was inspired, no doubt, by the Guises' intense dislike of the heretics and the hereditary French jealousy of England; it was in direct contradiction to what was to be the policy of Catherine de' Medici, who offered one by one the hands of her sons in matrimony to this same heretic Queen whose birthright was thus publicly denied by the Court of France.

Here again, as in the matter of the secret betrayal of her country, Mary did not act with that precocious wisdom which her admirers would have us believe she possessed. Elizabeth Tudor may have been nothing but a name to her—a bastard and a heretic, and as such neither to be honoured nor feared, but her judgment might have shown her how difficult it would be for her to make good any claim to the throne of England, on which Elizabeth Tudor had mounted with the full consent of a rejoicing people, the majority of whom had joined the reformed religion. Nor did any native prudence forewarn her of the consequences of this public insult to the monarch of the kingdom neighbour to her own—an insult not only to the sovereign but to the whole people of England. Whether she had any genuine hopes of ousting Elizabeth, or whether this was a mere high-spirited flourish on her part, we do not know. She seems, on the surface, to have quartered the English arms

without misgivings and to have permitted her own and her husband's men to wear the liveries of an English sovereign without hesitation.

Elizabeth Tudor was deeply and for ever offended and with grievous consequences for Mary Stewart.

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In the July of the following year, 1559, there were great rejoicings in Paris for a double marriage had been arranged to celebrate the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis which left France in possession of Calais and her acquisitions in Lorraine, but denied to her most of the conquests of the preceding reign. The Treaty was not, however, altogether unfavourable to France in view of the defeat of the Battle of St. Quentin in 1554, and the foiling of the efforts of François de Guise and De Brissac in Italy by the generalship of Alva.

The two marriages were those between Henry's daughter, Elizabeth de Valois and Philip II of Spain, and between Philip's sister, Margaret, and the Duke of Savoy.

The formal rejoicings on this occasion were to be productive of more startling political consequences than those that followed either of the two marriages, for Henri II, in his character of artificial gallant knight, was showing his prowess at the tournaments when the shaft of the spear of his opponent, the Constable de Montmorenci, entered his eye.

He died within a few days. He was forty years of age, in good health, and his decease was of course completely unexpected. Mary Stewart, after a bare two years of marriage, was Queen Consort of France as well as Queen Regnant of Scotland and, in the opinion of Roman Catholic Europe, titular Queen of England and Ireland.

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This unlooked-for event seemed to place the Guises unexpectedly at the summit of their hopes. This powerful prince and this mighty priest stood directly behind the throne on which was seated their youthful niece, three times a Queen.

The position at the Court was instantly changed by the retirement of the dazzling favourite, who had reigned so long and so securely, into the splendid solitudes of Anet, by the emergence from obscurity and neglect of the Dowager Queen, Catherine de' Medici, who stood face to face with the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Duke of Guise, with only the throne, on

which sat a sickly youth, between them; the Guises ruled the country, the priest the Church, the soldier the State.

The health of the young King, François II, must from the first have given these ambitious princes deep concern. All the male children of Catherine de' Medici were delicate; they seem to have suffered, as far as can now be learned, from some disease of degeneracy for which François I may have been responsible. The two elder sons, François and Charles, suffered from a complication of diseases, the various manifestations of tuberculosis and rickets, and the entire family was childless—the dregs of a notable House.

Mary Stewart's boy husband had languished from his early boyhood; Mary was more nurse than wife to him during their brief wedded life. His continual sickness must have kept her much apart from the formalities of the Court, have given her life an austere and melancholy tinge and forced her into a self-abnegation and self-sacrifice that did not come naturally to her youth or disposition, for she was one made for gaiety and action.

We have few details of Mary's life as Queen of France. It must have been spent almost entirely in attendance on the wasting boy, in struggles, cold and civil on the surface, but passionate and bitter underneath, with her mother-in-law, in the company of her uncles of Guise and Lorraine and in that of her grandmother, in listening to their advice and exhortations. No doubt she thrilled to the splendour of her position; she was high-spirited and arduous, ambitious and, in the best sense of the word, proud. It is most probable that she liked being Queen of France, that all affection apart, she hoped her husband would live to continue her in this honour. She must have given much anxious thought to her Northern Kingdom. A certain number of Scotch nobles, including her half-brother, the Lord James Stewart, came and went from the French Court. She must have been in close touch, through her mother, with the various tumults caused by the double conflict between the two religions, the nobility and the power of the Crown in her native country, but we do not know if she intended always to rule her native kingdom by proxy and to reside permanently in France, whether she ever intended a visit to Scotland, or whether she expected the Scotch passively to accept a position as an appanage of the Crown of France.

Whatever Mary, or rather her advisers, the Guise princes

may have thought of the Scotch and the English situation it was such as to give pause to any thoughtful adherent of the Stewarts and the Pope.

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When Elizabeth Tudor had first come to the throne she had not embraced the tenets of the Reformation with that eagerness which the Protestants had hoped for; she continued to hear Mass in her private chapel and, as was usual with her, to dally with the situation. But on April 29th, 1559, the Act that legalized the Reformation came into force, and as the able and diligent Spanish Ambassador, Alvero Quadra, Bishop of Aquila, noted bitterly : " Yesterday they took away the Sacrament from the Palace chapel " and " the heretics of our times have never been such spoilt children of the Devil as these are."

Elizabeth, from this date, had definitely pledged herself to the Protestants, having refused the hand of Philip II, and stood openly and in direct opposition to the Roman Catholicism so fiercely championed by the House of Guise and to the claims of their niece, the Scottish Queen.

Elizabeth's principal minister was Sir William Cecil, a statesman equal to any in Europe; his task, that of preserving the independence and liberty of England, was of extraordinary difficulty. Both he and Elizabeth's other able advisers and agents employed, without scruple, every means of direct and indirect deceit, duplicity, craft and treachery to gain their ends; the Queen abetting them in all the most dubious twists of their anxious policies. Since these practices, as well as secret assassination and judicial murder were used all over Europe as political weapons there is no need to put in any plea or justification for the behaviour of Elizabeth and her advisers; they played merely the same game as that of their opponents; to have altered their methods of proceeding, to have become open, honourable, candid, truthful, staunch to their promises, above board in all their actions would have been to woo defeat and place England " at the proud foot of a conqueror ".

During the early years of her reign Elizabeth was at bay; the country was poor with no more than four millions of inhabitants, it was ringed by foes, and the religion adopted by the majority of the English was in fear of extermination. Many of the powerful princes of Europe, such as Philip II and the Guise brothers, had indeed resolved to exterminate Protestantism; the English had to fear not only the loss of their temporal

freedom but the most ruthless persecution of their chosen Faith. Elizabeth's slow, intricate, shifty, bewildering policies were the only effectual means to postpone a foreign war until the enemy powers, France and Spain, should have weakened themselves and each other, until the English navy should have been built up, and that strong national spirit, more powerful than even money or numbers, inspired and cherished.

The situation was cruelly complicated by the question of the Succession. In England as in Scotland, a young woman was the last of the direct royal line; if Elizabeth died without heirs would Mary Stewart and her Roman Catholic husband succeed in annexing Scotland and England to France? If Mary died without heirs would Elizabeth seize Scotland from the Hamiltons and Lennox factions who derived their claims from Margaret, the sister of Henry VIII? And there was the Lady Catherine Grey, who, according to the terms of the will of Henry VIII, was next in succession after Elizabeth, and who had secretly married Lord Hertford, eldest son of the ambitious Duke of Somerset.

To add to the torments with which these questions perplexed the politicians of Europe was the dubious health of the two Queens. Envoys spying on Elizabeth and bribing her women to divulge her most intimate affairs, were already hinting to their masters that the Queen "was not as other women" (as Lady Lennox and Lady Shrewsbury long afterwards informed Queen Mary), and though Sir William Cecil implored his mistress "to find a father for her children" there was a strong rumour afloat to the effect that she was incapable of bearing offspring. On the other hand several people during her reign were sent to the Tower for stating that she had had children secretly, and there are those who, at the present day, believe that she was a mother several times, either as the result of a hidden marriage or of a clandestine love affair.

Elizabeth kept her own secret and succeeded in baffling everyone. Whether she was wife, maid, or wanton, her policy of delaying her marriage from year to year, and, finally, not marrying at all, suited the nation very well. All the Princes of Europe who could in any way be considered eligible were offered to her and she "yea'd and nay'ed" with them indefinitely. Her personal attitude was ambiguous and highly exasperating

to the foreign envoys. She " disliked the estate of marriage ", she " liked the state she was in ", she " would wish to be a nun in a cell ", she longed to think " virgin Queen " might be inscribed on her tomb. She had also her practical objections to her unseen suitors, " her nonsense " as De Quadra called it bitterly. She would not marry " on the faith of portrait painters ", nor except " with a man of worth whom she had seen and spoken to ". She did not want " a husband who would sit at home all day among the cinders ", yet it was obvious that she would brook no rival to her power.

In short, De Quadra found " this wilful woman " impossible to understand and " possessed of a hundred thousand devils ". Whatever Elizabeth's game, if it was founded on policy, patriotism, pride, a previous affection, a physical disability, a mere caprice, she played it with a cunning that held all Europe vexed and amazed, backed as she was by the consummate statecraft of men like Cecil, Walsingham, and Throckmorton, men who, whatever their code might be towards others, were implicitly faithful towards her and the ideals that she represented.

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At the time when Mary Stewart came to the throne of France, Elizabeth was in her twenty-eighth year and enjoying a splendour that made amends for her years of imprisonment, poverty, and effacement. The Mantuan envoy, Il Schifanoya, described in a dispatch to his master a festival at Whitehall where the Queen received, with false courtesy masking hatred, the French Ambassadors who had come to receive her ratification of the Treaty of Cateau-Cambresis. The Palace was hung with " very choice tapestries " and gold and silver brocade, " the whole galleries closed in with wreaths of fresh flowers and leaves of most beautiful designs ". The Queen appeared in purple, with a profusion of jewels that " added much to her beauty ". She afterwards walked in the orchard, talking Latin, Italian and French in a " loud tone so as to be heard by everybody ". The banquet that followed was as sumptuous as that which had graced Mary Stewart's marriage; there were " most precious and costly drinking cups of gold and rock crystal and other jewels ", there was a door composed entirely of living roses and foliage, there were courtiers in full dress " with the collar of St. Michael, all in pompous array ", and there was a feast " wonderful for large and excellent joints ". The

fastidious Mantuan adds, however, that it was lacking in "the delicacy and cleanliness customary in Italy". * * *

It is easy to reconstruct the likeness of Queen Elizabeth at this period when Mary Stewart was beginning to display her much lauded beauty. The daughter of the enchanting Anne Bullen was pale, frail like the pallid moonslip that was the device of Cynthia, one of her poetical names, and had high features of exceeding delicacy, preserved by washes of lilies and elder-flower, showing between the crimped locks of red-gold hair, while the narrow white bosom was revealed, after the fashion of unmarried women in England, beneath the boned and goffered ruff that concealed the throat and above the bodice loaded with heavy jewellery. The rest of the figure was disguised in clumsy stiff magnificence that allowed only the pale fine hands and tiny feet to be glimpsed.

To complete the portrait of this strange woman, who with her temper, her graciousness, her cruelty, her fiery spirit, her courage and her craft identified herself with an entire nation as few sovereigns have succeeded in doing, it must be added that at the time when she began to meddle actively in the affairs of Mary Stewart she was, even while coquetting with matrimonial offers from princes eager to rule or annex England in her name, creating a considerable scandal by her open favour to a commoner and a married man.

This was a younger son of the Duke of Northumberland, Lord Robert Dudley, who was about the same age as the Queen; he had been a prisoner in the Tower when she was there, though it is not known if they had met in their common misfortune. It is not clear why this gallant pleased Elizabeth, his arts and graces were of a kind that do not survive mortality; he was neither a good soldier, nor a sound politician, nor accomplished above his rank, nor possessed of any sterling qualities of head or heart. His morals were no better than those of his neighbour, and his portraits, showing him stiffly arrayed in the baroque magnificence of the period, reveal no peculiar good looks.

The Queen, however, found great delight in his company; whether he touched her heart, her senses, or her mind, whether she felt for him passion, affection, or a fantastic caprice, we do not know, but it is beyond dispute that she compromised herself openly for his sake, making her name,

which she was so anxious should appear above "virgin" on her tomb, a byword in the European Courts.

So much were her relations with Dudley discussed abroad that her envoy at the Imperial Court, the astute, discreet and loyal Sir Thomas Chaloner, sent a protest and warning on the matter to Cecil—"folks are broad-mouthed"—"I count the slander most false, but a young Princess cannot be too wary."

Elizabeth, however, was far from wary; she recked nothing of prudence nor of Lady Dudley, the neglected wife who had been Amy Robsart and who never came to Court but who lived ignored at Cumnor Hall. The ugly situation was emphasized by the continual quarrels of Thomas Howard, the fourth Duke of Norfolk and premier peer of England, with the insolent favourite.

The Scots Queen of France must have heard all this gossip and no doubt discussed it, in amused interest and disdain, with her husband and her uncles. Sinister rumours that Lady Dudley was ill and might soon conveniently die were abroad and it was believed by many that in that event Elizabeth would marry the widower.

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Mary Stewart had other matters with which to fill her thoughts than the scandals of her neighbour Queen; the news from Scotland was always disturbing. Mary of Guise had returned to find the Lords of the Congregation, as the chiefs of the Reformed party entitled themselves, in possession of power. Although ill with dropsy ("my legs are soft as butter," she wrote) and worn with fatigue, disappointment, and grief, Mary of Guise valiantly, with the aid of a faithful few, upheld her daughter's right. She appealed, and not in vain, for French help, and the Lords, on the other hand, earnestly besought and secretly obtained assistance from Elizabeth. The English Queen would not, nevertheless, tolerate one of their most active agents, John Knox, who had returned to Scotland to foment, with all the resources of his fearless eloquence, passionate fanaticism and sincere, bigoted beliefs, the popular rage against the Romanists. Try to explain his words away as he would, Queen Elizabeth would have none of the author of "The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women"; he was nearly as distasteful to her as he was to Queen Mary. Most of the Lords, including Lord James Stewart, Mary's half-brother, who, as "Com-

mendator of St. Andrew's", clung to Church revenues and who was dangerously enriched with Church spoils, were either in the pay of Elizabeth, or worked in her interest in the hope of future benefits.

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Shortly before the accession of Mary's husband to the throne of France, an important puppet placed himself at the disposal of Elizabeth and she used him eagerly to meddle in Scotch affairs. This was James Hamilton, Earl of Arran, first Prince of the Blood in Scotland (after his father, the Duke of Châtelherault and former Regent) and heir presumptive to Mary.

This position was important for, if there were doubts as to Elizabeth's capacity for producing children, Mary's health was not considered good; she was subject to fainting fits, suspected by some of epilepsy, and there was little likelihood of any issue from her marriage with an immature, diseased youth. Henry VIII had once in vain offered the infant Elizabeth's hand to James Hamilton; Arran thought regretfully of that lost chance, and saw himself as the lucky suitor of the Protestant Queen, whose union with him should consolidate their joint claims to England and Scotland. The Lennox pretensions were not as sound as those of Arran and the heiress presumptive of England was Lady Catherine Grey, recently disgraced through a secret marriage that Elizabeth refused to regard as valid. Arran was a Protestant backed by the Lords in revolt against Mary of Guise, and his chance seemed good. Escaping from his father's estates in France (he had been made Captain of the Guard to François II, a position always held by a Scotch prince or great Scots noble), and avoiding the vigilance of the Guises, who distrusted his Protestant leanings, the young Earl, in disguise and under a false name, was smuggled into England and lodged in one of the royal palaces. Cecil approved his marriage with Elizabeth, but that lady, though she received him with encouraging graciousness, was not moved by either his person or his zeal to forsake the fascinating Dudley. She lured him, however, no doubt, with false promises of favours to come, and dispatched him, full of ardour for her service, to Scotland, where he was a valuable cause of mischief to the harassed Mary of Guise.

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This business of Arran was a cause of deep vexation to the

Guise brothers, the virtual rulers of France, and must have deeply chagrined Mary, who was following with such passionate fear and hope her mother's struggles in Edinburgh. She was already beginning to sense what vehement anger and implacable distrust she had roused in Harry Tudor's daughter by her thoughtless assumption of the Royal Arms of England, that arrogant blunder on the part of her father-in-law which had caused her to make a claim that, although just in the eyes of a majority of Europeans, could not possibly be maintained. Elizabeth's hand was suspected, perhaps justly, in the Protestant conspiracy known as the Tumult of Amboise, directed at the House of Guise and by them at once and fearfully crushed. We do not know what were Mary's feelings about this bloody and horrible episode of her brief reign as Queen of France; she, like many another woman by nature gay and gentle, easy and pitiful, must have learned to endure the cruelties, violences, and brutalities of the men who surrounded her, perhaps learned to condone them, to become indifferent at least, may have, indeed, possibly learned to think of them as necessary expedients of policy, that, on occasion, even a woman might bring herself to use and be forgiven for so doing.

About this time the fair young Queen of France must have seen one who was to play no unimportant part in her future life. Among the nobles sent by Mary of Guise to represent her desperate case to her kinsfolk was James Hepburn, Earl Bothwell, a powerful Border noble, who although a Protestant, had proved a brilliant and loyal servant to the Queen Regent in her struggles against the English and the Lords. He had been, probably, educated in France and united to the reckless bravery and audacious arrogance of the Scots noble the arts and polish of the French "*grand seigneur*". His moral character was not good; elegant gentleman as he appeared on the surface, he was capable of any ruffianism, a gambler, a seducer of women, a creature without pity or scruple, addicted, probably, though this is not certain, to those vices even the immoral term infamous. He was fond of poetry and music, of dancing and dress, of gorgeous display, he lived swiftly and was afraid of nothing. At the time of his visit to France this magnificent firebrand was about twenty-four years of age, had already been married or "*handfasted*" to a Scots lady, Jane Beaton, niece of Cardinal Beaton, whom he had abandoned,

and had just deserted Anne Throndsson, a Danish lady of wealth whom he had met in Denmark on his way to France and whom he had won under a promise of marriage. Bothwell was—as the supporters of Sir William Pickering said with zest when they put that gallant forward as a rival to Dudley in Queen Elizabeth's admiration—“eminently successful with women”. He combined the attractions of the bold man of action with the graces of the courtier and the passion of the eager lover; he had an imposing air of authority and command, for in Liddesdale and Lothian he ruled like a Prince.

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Bothwell's grandfather, Lord Patrick Hepburn, was created Earl of Bothwell (or in contemporary style, “Erle Boithwillie”) in 1481. He also received from James IV the office of Lord High Admiral of Scotland and other dignities that descended to his grandson. It is therefore an error to assert, as many writers have done, that the fourth Earl, James Hepburn, later Duke of Orkney, was granted his considerable honours by Queen Mary.

Bothwell Castle, the most superb structure of its kind in the south of Scotland, rises still, an impressive ruin on the banks of the Clyde, here heavily wooded, and known in the melancholy twilight of ballad and legend as “Bothwell Bank”. The song “Bothwell Bank, thou bloomest fair” was widely spread over Europe even in the sixteenth century.

The second Earl of Bothwell, Adam Hepburn, went down in the bloody confusion of Flodden Field; his son Patrick, the “fair Earl”, was also described by a contemporary as the “most vain and insolent man in the world, full of pride and folly” (Sir Ralph Sadler). He married Agnes, a daughter of a haughty Norman House—the Sinclairs, from whom he was divorced in 1543. This lady, who was known as the Lady of Morham, bore her husband two children—James, the fourth Earl, and Jane, who married in 1562 the Queen's half-brother, Lord John Stewart, Prior of Coldingham, son of James IV and Margaret Erskine, the Lady of Lochleven. The grandfather of the first Earl of Bothwell, Lord Patrick Hepburn of Hales, had courted in vain the fair Jane Beaufort, widow of James I and the heroine of “The King's Quair,” and his son, the father of the first Earl, had unsuccessfully wooed Mary of Guelders, widow of James II.

It is, then, curious to note that the third Earl declared in

writings still extant, that Mary of Guise had twice given him a written assurance that she would be his wife, and this before his divorce. Thus the father's history faintly foreshadows that of the son, and Mary Stewart's third husband proves to be the fourth of his House to cast ambitious glances at a widowed Queen of Scotland, though Mary was Queen Regnant, not Queen Dowager. This reference to Mary of Guise is in contradiction to her reputation for a blameless discretion, and perhaps may be held slightly to confirm the odious charges brought against the Lorraine Princess by John Knox—that she was the mistress of Cardinal Beaton and probably had other lovers. However, the energetic Reformer could scarcely be considered sane when dealing with these "poor, silly Jezebels" as he termed any Roman Catholic lady, and his testimony is not worth much.

The fourth Earl of Bothwell was trained at Spynie Castle, near Elgin, by his uncle, Patrick Hepburn, Bishop of Moray. We have only the evidence of George Buchanan that the youth was brought up in an atmosphere of vice by a dissolute prelate at Spynie—unfortunately, most of the information about Bothwell comes from his enemies. At least, the young James Hepburn grew up cultured and even learned in a period when many, even of his rank, could not write their names. Two examples of his library exist; each has his beautiful book-plate with his arms with supporters, coronet, helm, crest, mantling and, the motto "Kiip Trest" (Keep Trust), the whole enclosed in a ribbon that bears in Latin the Earl's honours as Lord High Admiral and Bailiff of Crichton and Liddesdale. Both these books are in French; one is a tract on military matters by Robert Valturin (1555) bound with a translation of works on the same subject, from the classics. The other is a mathematical work by two authors (1538).

On his accession to the Earldom at the age of nineteen or twenty (the exact date of his birth seems dubious) James Hepburn was one of the most powerful nobles in Scotland; he held two fortresses, Hales and Crichton, as well as Bothwell, and was appointed Keeper of Hermitage Castle, the grim defence of the wild and lonely Southern Borders or Marches, as well as Lieutenant-General of the Frontier—an exceedingly important post in view of the political situation with regard to England.

In a letter to the Bishop of Dunblane, Queen Mary afterwards proudly referred to these early honours—"notwithstanding his youth, he was chosen as most fit out of the whole of

our nobility to be our Lieutenant upon the Borders, having the whole charge as well as to defend as to assail".

Nor was the warlike youth backward in this "assailing"; in 1558, acting for the Regent, Mary of Guise, he made an expedition into England that he himself relates (in French). "I have done irreparable damage on the frontier, and equally to those who live there."

With the two exceptions of the Hamiltons and the Lennox Stewarts, each of whom had a possible claim to the Crown, Bothwell had no superior among the Scotch nobility, and his position might be described as almost that of a Prince. His mother survived him, and as she left all that she was possessed of to his sole issue, an illegitimate son whose mother is unknown, it may be assumed that she sympathized with his wild fortunes and pitied his terrible downfall.

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Mary may have known this attractive gentleman before 1560, he may even have been one of her household at Joinville; in any case, it is most likely that she received him on this occasion for, not only was this Protestant ("the stoutest and the worst thought of") a recklessly loyal servant of her mother, but he had deserved well of Mary on other counts. He was the hero of two exploits most likely to appeal to a young romantic Princess, one who admired courage above all other manly qualities. He had accused the adventurous Arran of being a traitor and a formenter of the rebellion (as indeed he was) and had challenged him, though in vain, to single combat, in the ancient knightly fashion. He had also, as Lieutenant-General of the Border, made a spirited sortie into England, and, more important, seized Cockburn of Ormiston, who was secretly conveying English gold to the sorely pressed Lords. Not only was this money extremely useful to the Queen Regent, but its capture revealed as truth what before had been merely suspicion, namely, that Elizabeth was helping the Lords and Arran. In vain did the English Queen rage and deny this patent fact; Bothwell's bold exploit had given Mary Stewart yet another reason to fear and mistrust Elizabeth Tudor.

Bothwell's Castle of Crichton, "his chief house", in Midlothian, had been sacked and his estates sold in revenge for his capture of the English gold, and it was therefore not only as one who had served Mary of Guise but as one who had suffered for her that the young Earl stood before the Scottish Queen

of France. There is no reason to believe that she did not receive him with innocent and generous pleasure and present him to her husband as a faithful and valuable servitor of the House of Stewart, nor any ground for supposing that she knew anything of either Jane Beaton or Anne Thronessöñ or had heard any whisper of the fascinating soldier's ugliest failings.

Affairs came to a crisis in Scotland while Mary Stewart watched from Paris powerless to interfere, save by beseeching the Guise brothers for aid and encouraging such ruffling captains as Bothwell. Elizabeth threw off the mask, proclaimed war on Scotland in a manifesto which was a violent diatribe against the House of Guise (March, 1560) and sent an army across the Border and a fleet to besiege Leith. The dying Mary of Guise, at bay but undaunted, took refuge in Edinburgh Castle, and Mary Stewart, on hearing this news, broke down and refusing all consolation, made herself ill with weeping and had to take to her bed.

Fortune for once, however, was with the Scottish Queen. The English were repulsed from before Leith (May, 1560) much to the wrath of Elizabeth, and the Duke of Norfolk's military expedition was not more successful.

This was balanced by the death of Mary of Guise, the one person who had stood, with complete loyalty, for the integrity of the heritage of the Stewarts. No misfortune, pain nor disease, fatigue nor grief had been able to quench the serene courage of this daughter of the great House of Lorraine. When she died of dropsy at Edinburgh, worn out by the continual vexations of her impossible position, she had nobly performed a thankless task, magnanimously done a distasteful duty. Even those brutal nobles who had been so furiously contending against her power were moved to distress by her heartbroken death, and the manner in which, almost with her last words, she conjured them to return to their loyalty to the House of Stewart and asked their pardon for "what she had done amiss".

The rebel Lords, however, though so greatly moved by the noble words of Mary of Guise, did not hesitate to force on her the attendance of a Protestant Pastor, one John Willock, whose administration the dying Princess, tactful to the last, brought herself to receive.

The young Queen of France had not seen her mother for some years; but she was deeply affected by this grief, "going

from agony to agony". This loss was more to her than a sentimental one, for there was no one else in Scotland who had her interests so intensely at heart, who would stand for her cause so single-mindedly as had this gallant Princess. "The Most Christian Queen", wrote the Venetian envoy to the French Court, "loved her mother incredibly and much more than daughters usually love their mothers." Probably the girl's heart, generous and warm, was touched by the tender loyalty of her one true friend. Mary of Guise had hoped to die in France among her kin. Her younger brother, René, the Marquis D'Elbœuf, had sailed to Scotland to relieve her of the Regency, but had been driven back by storms; the frustration of this last pathetic desire must have added to the poignancy of her daughter's sorrow. It was the Cardinal, delicate, tactful and kind, who broke the news to his niece, but all his tenderness could not prevent her utter collapse. She had only been Queen of France eleven months, she must have observed the state of her husband's health and the bitter enmity of her mother-in-law, waiting, watchful in the background, and she may have felt that the death of her mother was presage of worse misfortunes to come.

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Elizabeth's ministers took instant advantage of the removal of their sharpest enemy, the Queen Regent; on July 6th was concluded the Treaty of Edinburgh, a diplomatic victory for England and the Lords of the Congregation who signed it, in the absence of Mary and her husband, as virtual rulers of Scotland. The French were to withdraw from Scotland, all offices were to be in Scotch hands, the Sovereigns were not to make war without the consent of the Estates, Mary Stewart was to resign all pretensions to the English Crown. Elizabeth wanted even harder terms—nothing less than the return of Calais and an indemnity for Mary's use of the English Royal Arms, this original grievance still rankling deeply.

Sir William Cecil received, however, these impossible demands, greatly to his joy, after the Treaty was signed.

In the following August the Mass and Papal Jurisdiction were abolished in Scotland by the Lords of the Congregation, and John Knox, following up Arran's example of a few months previous, led a whirlwind campaign against the Romanists and all signs of their worship, leaving ruin, death, and blight in his trail.

The Pope and France lost rapidly, and for ever, all hope of domination in Scotland.

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Mary and her husband resented strongly the Treaty of Edinburgh (which the French Commissioners declared they were helpless to resist signing), and refused to ratify it. Elizabeth could hardly have hoped that they would do so, since it would mean that they consented to the adoption of the Calvinistic Confession of Faith in Scotland and to Mary's renunciation of her claims as heiress-presumptive to the throne of England.

Whatever Mary's plans for her Northern Kingdom and the struggle with Elizabeth were, and we do not know them, they must have been held in abeyance by the state of her husband's health. He was, plainly, dying; every day saw him sunk deeper into the final lethargy.

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He was much dependent on her gentle administrations and her tender devotion was irreproachable. Mary Stewart was too young to have to endure the sight of so much suffering, the many painful and disgusting details of such a malady. Her own health languished, and her spirits, naturally so high, sank. The unfortunate young Prince, who had had no opportunity to reveal his disposition but who was credited with having natural ability and being of a sweet and pleasing nature, developed an impostume in the ear—"that rotten ear" as John Knox afterwards coarsely remarked, "that would not hear the Gospel"—and died miserably the November of the year which had seen the death of Mary of Guise and the signing of the Treaty of Edinburgh.

The power of the House of Guise, their hopes of commanding two youthful puppets seated on the throne of France had vanished, the figure of Catherine de' Medici emerged finally from obscurity and dominated France. There was no place for Mary Stewart in the country where the Italian would be Regent to the new King, Charles IX, brother of François, a boy ten years old.

Brantôme extols greatly the beauty of the widowed Queen at this period. He could recall, he writes, "how the dazzling whiteness of her complexion outshone the white draperies of her royal mourning". A statement that does not seem very consistent with the reports that about this time she suffered

from an attack of smallpox, of all diseases most fatal to the exquisite bloom of the complexion. It seems likely, however, that many ailments that were named smallpox were complaints of a far less deadly nature. It is more probable that Mary caught some infection from the husband whom she had nursed so conscientiously. An exquisite drawing, "Le Deuil Blanc", mentioned by Brantôme as the last likeness to be taken of Mary Queen of Scots in France, is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale and shows us the widow in the mourning which her admirers found so becoming. This is a first sketch for a portrait; there are several versions in oil of this where the face is unmistakably the same as that of the earlier drawings; the expression, melancholy, withdrawn, inscrutable, is also similar. In this drawing the eyes, which appear half-closed owing to the heavy, swollen look of the upper and lower lids, glance at the spectator in an oblique and almost furtive fashion. The face has a mature look for a girl of eighteen; it is rounded and robust, there is nothing frail nor delicate in these well-modelled features. The eyebrows are slightly more distinct than in the earlier sketch, and the dark hair, chestnut-brown dusted with gold as it appears to have been, is gathered in clusters of curls either side of the forehead which was, according to the profile bust on the silver festoon taken after her marriage, unbecomingly high; this, however, is concealed by the plain widow's cap. A close pleating of lawn entirely veils bust, shoulders, and neck. This is probably the most skilful and the most interesting, as well as the most attractive of all the authentic portraits of Mary.

To this period belong several miniatures, none of which give any idea of rare beauty or fascinating charm save the exquisite little painting of almost incredible lightness and grace belonging to the Duke of Portland. Some experts have questioned whether this be Mary or another French princess, but it bears one of her anagrams, "*Virtutis Amore*" (Marie Stouard). She is known to have used these anagrams, "*Veritas Armata*" for instance, on the embroideries of a bed, and "*Sa Vertu m'attire*" referring to the magnet. If this be Mary is it another "Deuil Blanc", or does it represent her as Queen of France? This delicious miniature is worked entirely in tones of white and cream; the costume is remarkable, even for that fantastic period. The sad-faced lady wears

a plain white gown with a high plain ruff and loose sleeves, over this a short white cape with embroidered seams, turned back to show the ermine lining. The usual small peaked cap rests on the clusters of rich hair, then, over all, is a curious gauze veil, stiffened into the shape of a hood round the face and fastened under the ruff; this is edged with narrow lace and gathered into a crown at the back, while the billowing folds are gathered up and, appearing to be dropped over a cushion, form a background to the figure. A coverlet seems to be drawn up to the waist, and the impression is that the delicate creature is propped up in bed, though no more uncomfortable dress for an invalid could be imagined. She holds a Book of Hours, and her features, slightly idealized from those shown in the French drawings, are unsmiling and haughty, and though lovely, unattractive in their serene melancholy.

In contrast to this the Leven and Melville portrait (if it be Mary and some of the jewels on the *touret* or winged frame have been identified as belonging to her), which is presumed to date from this period, or to be a copy of a portrait taken in 1560. In the opinion of many this is the most fascinating of Mary's portraits. Here there is no trace of mourning, the dress is extremely rich, far too gorgeous and stiff for the young, smooth, slightly smiling face; there is a great profusion of the pear-shaped pearls, the square-cut jewels, the heavy gold settings, then so fashionable. The features appear to be those of Mary and are finely painted, but, despite the praises lavished on this excellent picture, it scarcely does more than suggest a good-looking young woman in unbecoming splendour; the white miniature is the only likeness of Mary that gives a hint of the enchantment of the Queen of the legends—"La princesse lointaine".

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These portraits, whether they be authentic or no, whether they be taken from the life or worked up afterwards from sketches and memory, are the last we shall see of Mary until everything in her life had ceased save sorrow. Though she is supposed to have taken her painter, Jehan à Court, with her to Scotland, there exists no likeness of her made during her brief reign. From these early French paintings and drawings, from a few coins and miniatures, none of them of surpassing merit, we have to build up the image of this woman, considered by

her contemporaries not only beautiful, but " sweet " and " lovesome ", bewitching and dangerous by reason of her fascinations during the flower of her youth and prime, and enchanting even during the most moving and terrible circumstances of her life when her beauty became " other than it was ".

She probably had that lack of personal vanity that belongs to a generous, proud, passionate nature and disdained to concern herself with sittings for her portrait. Although there was not, as far as is known, any painters of skill in Scotland at this period, the admirable likeness of Earl Morton, among others, proves that some artist, probably a foreigner, was working in Edinburgh during Mary's lifetime.

When she emerged from the retirement compulsory on royal widowhood—a candle-lit seclusion of many weeks—she was ill from grief and this unnatural life. Her profound sorrow at the death of her young husband was much remarked upon and admired by her friends and flatterers. To suppose, however, that her seclusion, longer and more complete than it need have been for a mere official mourning, her tears and sighs, her melancholy, the quenching of her bright and ardent spirits, was not due entirely to the loss of François de Valois, is not to question her sincerity. It would have been impossible for anyone placed as she was not to realize that the death of the poor youth meant more to her than the loss of a husband. Encouraged by her grandmother, her uncles, and her cousins she had no doubt, naturally and in all innocence, dreamed of herself as ruling for years to come the Court of France to which she was accustomed and which suited her temperament and her training.

With her descent from the throne of France the power of the House of Guise, which had protected her and used her as a pawn, was snapped. Catherine de' Medici stepped into supreme authority. Mary knew that this formidable woman disliked her, she knew that her maternal relatives could do little more for her than offer her a dull and decorous asylum in one of their provincial palaces. She must have realized, with a dreadful poignancy of loss, that the valiant heart of Mary of Guise was stilled, there was no longer that intense loyalty, that strong courage on which to rest. Little as she may have cared for politics and little interest as she may have

taken in the affairs of Europe, she must also have understood that her assumption of the Royal Arms on the death of Mary Tudor had bitterly offended a woman whose friendship it was most necessary for her to retain, and who had already shown her power to injure Mary by her successful interference in Scottish affairs.

Advices from Scotland must also have warned her that if she desired to maintain her position in that country her presence there was necessary; two deputies were sent from the Lords asking her to return and the invitation could not have appeared attractive.

No active help was forthcoming from the House of Guise on this momentous occasion in the life of the young girl whom they had hitherto flattered and befriended. After her mourning was over she withdrew for a brief while once again under the protection of her maternal relatives. What advice they gave her, what directions they laid down for her future course, what plans were discussed between them, we do not know. All that is clear is that Mary early as January, 1561 (that is, not more than six weeks or so after the death of her husband) sent messages to Scotland to advise the country of her approaching arrival.

A picture painted soon after the accession of Charles IX (recently exhibited in London and in the possession of Miss Osborne-Smith) shows, with what convinces the spectator is remarkable fidelity, the woman who was to dominate France and therefore to play such an important part in European politics for years, grouped with four of her children. The painting is of the school of François Clouet (Janet), who has left us the exquisite drawings of Mary Stewart. It depicts the Dowager Queen in heavy mourning; the face is heavy and repellent with a slightly distorted, almost bruised look about the mouth. The three boys, attired in a tawny gold embroidered with silver, Charles IX, Henri, Duc d'Anjou, François, Duc d'Alençon, have the dark round features noticeable in the few portraits extant of Mary's first husband. The dark swarthiness of these youthful countenances is not one usually associated with the disease and weak-mindedness amounting to imbecility which afflicted the children of Catherine de' Medici.

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It must have been, and at once, atrociously clear to the shrewd intelligences of the Lorraine brothers that with this

woman they had to deal with no cypher, with no easy, timid, or stupid tool of a faction or a party. Catherine dc' Medici stood for the House of Valois, and in the name of that House she intended to reign, not only during the minority of her son, but long afterwards. But the Guise princes had by no means given up the struggle for power in which they had received such a severe rebuff by the death of the husband of their niece. For the moment, however, they were daunted, and appeared to find no further use for the young Queen of Scots, who a short time before had been one of their most valuable assets.

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A glimpse of the young widow's mind, which may be correct, is given by Sir John Heywood in the "Annals of the First Four Years of the Reign of Elizabeth" which was written more than ten years after the death of Mary Stewart.

"The country of Scotland she did not deem so far inferior to France as a private person is inferior to a prince, and for two respects that country did suit well enough with her liking, one, for it was the place of her birth, the other for it was the seat of her sovereignty."

With the charming optimism of high-spirited youth, Mary, according to this account, argued that the disorders which had been sometimes raised by the people were due to unskilful government, and reminded herself cheerfully that when the Scottish Kings had not attempted to impeach the liberty of the people they had lived without danger of honour or of life. This seems a powerful reflection on the judgment of her own immediate ancestors.

The prudence, discretion and precocious wisdom with which she is credited do not show in her next reflections, which, according to Heywood, were "that she nothing mistrusted the disability of her sex", for "besides the general respect that men bear towards women, in regard thereof many people would be governed only by princes of that sex"; she also relied (with a gravity and a gentle pride that is most touching) on her large endowments of nature—"a lovely and a lively countenance, fair features, fine and piercing wit, a mild and modest disposition, and her flower of youth and beauty."

Heywood goes on to remark on her affable and courteous behaviour due to her education at the Court of France and

states that "she intended not to make any alterations in the present state of affairs in Scotland", probably alluding to the supremacy of the Lords. Indeed, at this time Mary may have been firmly intentioned not to interfere with the wishes of her people in this respect.

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Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, the English Ambassador to France, had already struck a warning note in his dispatches to Elizabeth and to her counsellors :

"Your lordships will have to consider and have an eye to the marriage of that Queen. During her husband's life there was no great account made of her that (because), being under bond of marriage and the subjection of her husband, who carried the burden and care of all matters, there was offered no great occasion to know what was in her. But since her husband's death she has shown and so continually, that she is both of great wisdom for her years, of much modesty, and also great judgment in the wise handling of herself and her matters which, increasing with her years, cannot but turn greatly to her commendation, reputation, honour, and great benefit of her and her country."

The opinion of Sir Nicholas on Mary Stewart is valuable; not only was he a shrewd observer, well informed, acute and highly interested, but he had had personal experience of the "great judgment" of the widowed Queen, for he had endeavoured in vain to obtain from her a ratification of the Treaty of Edinburgh. She had evaded him, declaring that the matter was too great to proceed in without advice, meaning, of course, that she had already had advice, that of the Guise brothers. Neither could another English envoy, the puritan Earl of Bedford, cause her to change her mind. She would not agree to the Treaty that made an end of France and the Pope in Scotland and resigned all her own claims on the English Crown. The Englishmen felt that they were being faced by something of the spirit of Mary of Guise, and their reports of the courage, charms, and ability of Mary must have considerably exasperated Elizabeth, then at a very vexatious juncture of her own affairs.

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When Cecil returned from his triumphant diplomacy and the Duke of Norfolk from his successful military expedition in Scotland, they found themselves, despite their excellent

services, out of favour with the Queen, owing to the headway Dudley had made in her regard. She was still feigning to consider the Archduke and the Earl of Arran (whose claims to her hand had been formally put forward by the Lords of the Congregation) and several other princes were pretending to the crown matrimonial of England, but Dudley so obviously possessed the regard and confidence of the difficult, sharp-tempered, vain woman that all other wooers were in despair.

To Bishop Quadra she still "talked a lot of nonsense", to Cecil she was cold, to Norfolk hostile, from no one did she endeavour to disguise her liking for Dudley, which indeed, at this period, seemed to amount to an infatuation which points more to a strong physical attraction than to any intellectual affinity or mere caprice.

Lady Dudley was still living at Cumnor Hall, but Quadra did not hesitate to write to Philip II that Cecil was saying that Lord Robert "was thinking of killing his wife" and had remarked that the favourite "would be better in Paradise than here". The Queen, according to this same letter (September, 1560) told Quadra that Dudley's wife "was dead or nearly so" and begged him to say nothing of the matter, and afterwards said publicly, using the Italian tongue, "she broke her neck", in reference to Amy Robsart.

Historians are inclined to believe that this letter was deftly composed to blacken Elizabeth and Dudley and written after the news of the death of the favourite's wife had reached Windsor. Indeed, the remarks credited to Cecil are hard to believe. But however little Quadra may be relied on, the whole affair was, as he writes, "most shameful and scandalous".

The neglected wife had died, leaving Elizabeth free to marry her favourite, at a most convenient juncture, and she had died a violent death, being found dead at the bottom of a flight of stairs after she had been left alone, without even a servant at Cumnor Hall.

A Coroncr's Jury brought in a verdict of "Accidental Death", and Dudley, who had briefly retired from Court during the investigation, was again restored to favour. It will never be known how Amy Robsart met her end, but at the time the ugliest rumours were current, and eagerly received, of course, at the Court of France. Throckmorton wrote from Paris to Cecil: "touching the marriage of the Lord Robert and the

death of his wife, I know not where to turn me nor what countenance to make."

The Ambassador, goaded beyond bearing (perhaps stung by the malicious smiles and comments of Mary, then planning her Scottish journey), sent his secretary to inform personally the Queen of the deadly scandal that she was giving into the hands of her enemy. Elizabeth listened patiently, said she "had heard it all before", that Lord Robet had been cleared of his wife's death, laughed, "turned herself to one side and to the other, and set her hand to her face".

At the same time she withheld the promised peerage from Dudley, pouted when asked if she would have him, "would not marry a subject", and had no mind to make him a King.

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All these domestic affairs, which must have been, to any woman, extremely exasperating and nervously exhausting ("the Queen's Majesty looketh not so hearty and well as she did, by a great deal" reported Throckmorton's secretary) did not predispose Elizabeth to any consideration towards that vexatious rival, the Queen of Scots. It was not until February, 1561, that she sent belated condolences to Mary on her widowhood, and these (sent by the Earl of Bedford) were accompanied by advice as to the government of Scotland that Mary, an independent sovereign, resented, although she replied with cold civility. The Dudley scandal was at its height and Mary must have longed to bid Elizabeth set her own house in order before she interfered in other people's affairs, but, acting probably under the instructions of her Guise uncles, she spoke the English envoys fair, though she refused steadily to ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh. Pius IV had recently sent her the Golden Rose, naming her "a Rose among Thorns" in recognition of her fidelity to Rome.

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In March, 1561, Mary went to Paris (she had been residing in Lorraine) "to look out some of her robes and jewels"; she then took her way to Rheims where she was met by her noble kinsfolk of the House of Lorraine and by one who seemed to bring promise of escape from an intolerable position in France and a dubious future in Scotland. This was the young Duchess of Aerschot who was supposed to be, in the jealous, watchful opinion of Throckmorton and that of Catherine de' Medici, an emissary proposing the hand of Don Carlos, son of Philip II,

for Mary, a marriage that would have done much to restore the power of the House of Guise in France. The scheme, if scheme it amounted to, came to nothing probably through the intervention of Catherine de' Medici.

In May Mary attended the Coronation of Charles IX in the Cathedral of Rheims. Brantôme says that the young King was passionately in love with his sister-in-law and used to cover her picture with kisses and lamentations. But as he was merely ten years old when he was crowned, this emotion, if he really felt it, must have been evoked some years afterwards at sight of the portrait of Mary. At the time when she left him for ever he could not have regarded her with more than a childish affection. Both he and his little sister, Margaret de Valois, the future Queen of Navarre, no doubt regarded the tall, exquisitely good-humoured girl of eighteen with the tender admiration children feel for a charming playmate who is only slightly their elder.

Shortly before the Spanish marriage hopes had been frustrated and the gorgeous ceremony of Rheims (young as Mary was, she was to assist at no more such blazing pageants) the Lord James Stewart, with a splendid train, had arrived at Edinburgh to inform his sister of home affairs. Mary's half-brother, whom she met with at least outward trust and affection at Saint Dizier, was to be of considerable importance in her life and reign.

This son of James V and Lady Margaret Erskine, who bore her royal lover six children, but for that accident of birth, would have been on the Scottish throne, where he would certainly have ruled as ably as the wisest of his ancestors.

When he came to an age to choose his future career for himself, he discovered not only a dislike for the priesthood for which he had been destined, but for the ancient Faith. He came under the influence of John Knox and soon proclaimed himself a convert to the Reformed Religion, a cause which he took up with such enthusiasm, that he had accompanied the zealous Knox in that famous preaching tour through Fife which directly led to the demolition of the monasteries. By this time he had become one of the most arduous and conspicuous of the Lords of Congregation, who gained not only toleration but supremacy for the Reformed Faith in Scotland by the Treaty of Edinburgh. He was haughty, sagacious, strong featured, of polished address, of unquestioned courage, of clear and cool

eloquence, and, up to the present juncture, of unblemished reputation. Although he had made himself so conspicuous among the enemies of Rome he does not seem to have lost ground in Mary's affectionate regard, and he was twice received with distinction at the French Court, where policy, perforse, overruled dislike of the heretics. He was one of the Commissioners appointed by Parliament to be present at Mary's marriage, and soon after was sent by the Estates to urge his sister to accept the establishment of the Reformed Church in Scotland and to beg her to consider an alliance with England.

Mary seems to have trusted him and to have relied on him. Despite the difference in their religions and his part in the Treaty of Edinburgh, she appeared to have had the utmost confidence in his loyalty. It had, doubtless, been presented to her, even by the Guise princes themselves, that if she were to rule Scotland, which had so violently and so suddenly adopted the Reformed Faith, she must have in her counsels and confidence, a minister of that religion.

The Lord James was then in his thirtieth year, and the young girl to whom he was bound by such close blood ties may have noted with relief his obvious strength, patience, and reserve. Nor, perhaps, were his puritanical outlook, morals, and manners displeasing to one who had been so austrely trained by Antoinette de Bourbon. That he was dangerous, owing both to his position on the top step of the throne (though for ever barred from mounting it) and from ambitious arrogance, and brilliantly clever beneath his mask of serenity, does not seem to have occurred to Mary nor to her Guise advisers. Another fact that might have marked the Lord James out as a perilous counsellor was his extreme wealth. He held immense estates, gained partly from grants, partly from the spoils of the monastery, and even by more debatable means. He had obtained by skilful, though not very honourable manœuvres, the property of Christian Stewart, heiress of the property of the Buchans, to whom he had betrothed himself, but whom he had not married. He was also a pensioner of England and occasionally received valuable bribes from France.

This man, then, cool, quietly audacious, to every appearance reliable, breathing discreet devotion and affectionate loyalty, begged to be allowed to become Mary's mainstay in the task

which she had set herself—the ruling of that country which had proved too much for the talents and energy of her ancestors, and which had broken the heart, though it could not subdue the spirit, of her courageous mother. How seriously she took the future we do not know; whether to her it was an adventure to be gaily entered upon, whether she was appalled by the difficulties which lay before her, whether she devoted herself sincerely to the weal of her people, to the triumph of the ancient Faith, or whether she merely relied upon her Scottish counsellors and was content to pass from one day's events to another we do not know; it is impossible now to read her mind.

Did she and her Guise kin believe in the Lord James, despite his heresy and the part he had played in the late rebellion, or did they only affect to do so?

Her brother advised her, no doubt wisely, to bring no French troops to Scotland, to trust the loyalty of her Northern subjects, to rely on himself. He assumed that the ancient Faith was safe and only the reform of certain abuses were desired even by men like Knox.

For himself he asked the Earldom of Moray which had been in debate during the late troubles, but which was held by the Romanist Gordons, and the position of Regent during Mary's absence. These were, however adroitly disguised, practically the terms on which Mary was to be permitted to return to Scotland. The Guise brothers must have seen this, if Mary did not, and therefore, no doubt, the powerful heretic was most courteously received and sent away with fair words and promises, though both the Earldom and the Regency were refused.

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Mary may have thought that she had found a zealous and chivalrous champion in her brother, he seems to have been at least a match for the Guise Princes in diplomacy and to have "probed their minds" better than they had probed his schemes. What neither the young Queen nor her uncles could have suspected was that the Lord James, on his return to Paris, had sought out Throckmorton and detailed to him all the particulars of his interviews with Mary and his deductions thereon. He was pledged to Elizabeth, who, after this piece of cool treachery, decided, wisely, to back him instead of Arran, as future English deputy in Scotland. The man in whom Mary might have hoped, perhaps sincerely did hope, to find a true friend and protector, an honest adviser, was hand in glove with Cecil and

described by Throckmorton, writing to Elizabeth, as "a very honourable, sincere and godly gentleman very much affected to your Majesty".

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While the Lord James was still in France, another counsellor endeavoured to give Mary different advice from that offered by her brother. This was John Lesley, afterwards Bishop of Ross, who arrived from Scotland with the suggestions that Mary was to bring French troops with her on her homecoming, that she was to trust, and to trust only, her Roman Catholic subjects, that she should land, not at Leith, but at Aberdeen where the Cock of the North, Huntly, Chief of the Gordons, was true to Roman Catholicism. Lesley also urged Mary to have the Lord James arrested before he left France.

Mary did not act on any of this startling advice, though she sent her thanks to the Romanists in Scotland. She had been warned not to trust Huntly, who had betrayed her mother in 1559, and her position was one of cruel and increasing difficulty, and it is no wonder that while at Nancy she should have been seized by illness, "a sharp fit of ague or tierce".

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Lord Bothwell may have been in her train at this time; as she moved, with royal state, from one to another of her kinsfolk palaces she was accompanied by a stately retinue of French and Scottish nobility. When she reached Paris, in June, 1561, she was received by the little King, the Queen Mother, the King of Navarre, and all the Princes of the Blood.

Soon after, Throckmorton again waited on her and pestered her with the old vexatious demands, which she again put aside with some hauteur, hinting that Elizabeth would do well to refrain from encouraging the rebellious subjects of other Princes. At the same time she sent M. D'Oysel to Elizabeth to demand a passport. This was refused with a display of public temper on the part of the Queen of England which was not very creditable to her self-control and tact. She harked back to the grievance of the assumed Arms and the unratified Treaty of Edinburgh, and expressed herself very forcibly on the subject, refusing D'Oysel permission to go on to Scotland.

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Mary displayed more dignity than her royal cousin when she heard of this brusque refusal. She said that "if she were in a temper she would not have so many witnesses of her out-

burst as the Queen of England had had by her", and that as for the assumption of the Coat-of-Arms, she had acted under the bidding of her husband, and that, if she could not obtain the passport she would sail without one.

High-spirited, jealous of her prerogative, and eager for revenge on those whom she disliked as she was, she must have been sorely tempted to add that both the Arms and the Crown of England were indisputably hers by right since the heretic daughter of Anne Bullen never could be other than illegitimate in the eyes of a good Catholic. Mary, however, refrained from further inflaming Elizabeth's anger, and even tried to placate her in the matter of the Arms. She may have had some secret hopes of making Scotland the stepping-stone to England, she may have dreamed, inspired by the whisper of Cardinal of Lorraine in her ears, of reviving Catholicism in England, or she may have been indifferent to all such matters and been quite prepared to live peaceably with Elizabeth in a friendly if not a loving manner.

She was probably, already, as most spirited and sensitive young women would have been in her place, weary of these political intrigues, these religious differences, these personal broils. She did not know the extent of the self-seeking treachery by which she was surrounded, she could not have guessed that her brother, then in London, was possibly arranging her kidnapping in the Channel by an English fleet, but disillusion and fatigue show in her words to Throckmorton :

"If my preparations had not been so far advanced your Queen's unkindness might have stayed my voyage, but now I am determined to adventure the matter whatever comes of it. I trust that the winds may not be so unfavourable as to throw me on the English coast, but if they do, then your Queen will have me in her hands to do her will with me, and if she were so hard hearted as to desire my end, then she might do her pleasure and make a sacrifice of me."

Mary's next words had a note of despair :

"Peradventure that casualty might be better for me than to live. In this matter, God's will be done."

She spoke more truly than she knew; life had not much to offer her in the years that were to pass before Elizabeth, at long last, did "make a sacrifice" of her rival.

Mary had one more interview with Throckmorton when the old grievances were once more, and for the last time between these two, uselessly discussed.

"I assure you, whatsoever is thought, there is none of my uncles, nor none other here that will (I know not for what respect) give me their advice in this matter; but they do advise me to use the advice of my own subjects. You know I am young and do lack experience to proceed in so great a matter without advice. I do so much know mine own infirmity that I will do nothing (though it be of less weight than this is) without counsel."

This was all that the zealous Throckmorton could obtain from Mary for the satisfaction of the angry Elizabeth.

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On August 14th, 1561, Mary, after a progress where she had passed from one to another of those splendid convents that she was never to see again, reached Calais. A magnificent train of Princes accompanied her, Guise, Nemours, D'Aumale, D'Elbœuf, and an imposing retinue of nobles, gentlemen, ladies, servants, pages, musicians, poets, singers and tire women, the four Maries, and Brantôme, her flattering chronicler. She had with her, against the advice of the Cardinal of Guise, many of the French Crown Jewels. She had, however, returned to the Commissioners of Charles IX in the February of this year a magnificent jewel named the Naples Egg, a ruby to which was attached a pearl drop and which was valued at seventy thousand crowns.

An obscure serving man, one O'Connor, represented the power of England and the art of Cecil among this superb company; this humble spy had been paid by Throckmorton "to travail in Elizabeth's service".

"There is not one of them, but in his house I keep a servant fee'd."

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Mary had sent a gracious present, a service of silver gilt, to Lady Throckmorton, then in Paris; she always had this touching fashion of little courteous acts towards her enemies. She had early decided on a policy of conciliation towards Elizabeth and Elizabeth's servants.

On the Friday Throckmorton's servant saw the Queen and her company "haling out of that haven about noon with two galleys and two great ships".

"One of the galleys," says another eye witness, "being the greater, was all white, the other, coloured red, was well trimmed and appointed. She bore a white flag with the Arms of France, and in her stern another white flag glistening like silver." She had three of her uncles, Claude, Duc D'Aumale, René, Marquis D'Elbœuf, and the Grand Prior with her, as well as an imposing escort of French and Scottish gentlemen.

A thick fog (which John Knox likened to the dismal cloud of misfortune Mary's arrival was to bring on her native land) enabled these French galleys to escape the main body of the English fleet, if indeed Elizabeth had dared to plot with the Lord James a capture of his sister. Unwarranted and treacherous as such an act would have been, in time of peace, there can be no question but that, from Elizabeth's view point it would have been a superb "*coup d'état*", and that Scotland with the Lord James as deputy for England would have been far more at peace than it could ever hope to be under Mary's rule. The attempt to seize Mary, however, if serious attempt there was, failed, and Elizabeth had to cover up the activity of her cruisers by feigning that they were searching for pirates.

Most discreetly Cecil wrote to Throckmorton :

"The Queen's Majesty's ships that were upon the seas to cleanse them of pirates, saw her (Mary) and saluted her galleys, and staying her ships, examined them for pirates and dismissed them gently. One Scottish ship they stayed as vehemently suspected of piracy."

Sir William Maitland, it seems, had suggested the kidnapping of Mary, even if the Lord James had not, but Elizabeth either dared not touch the Scottish Queen, or did not judge it wise to do so. The possibility that the Lord James was a party to an attack on his sister does not preclude his loyalty to her when she was actually in Scotland; he was a prudent man and an opportunist.

We have only a few details of Mary's voyage; she saw a ship sink outside Calais harbour, she asked for some relief for the wretches chained to her galley benches, she slept on deck in the hope of catching a further glimpse of France where she had not been, perhaps, happy, but where she had been what she was hardly likely to be again, completely safe, respected, and honoured. France was her home, and to leave France, for ever, as she must have believed, was like going into exile. What

could she have recalled of Scotland beyond some dim remembrance of the gardens of the walled fortress of Dumbarton, or the lonely Priory at Inchmaholm, of the tapestried galleries of sombre palaces where she had played as a child, of grey skies and strong winds?

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She might well have considered her position with foreboding for it was one with which it was unfair to expect a woman of her age and bred as she was to cope. Her early marriage and widowhood had broken her life in extreme youth, the destiny for which she had been so carefully trained had been suddenly snatched from her, the people whom she had been taught to please and to understand were not, after all, to be her people. She was to go among strangers who were, however, her subjects, she was to take up the burden which her heartbroken father had let fall after Solway Moss and which had, after so many years and bitter struggles, killed her mother.

She was expected to rule people who had passionately adopted a Faith which she had been taught to regard as the most deadly heresy. Also, after having spent her short life in becoming habituated to the manners and customs, the turns and twists, to the policies and intrigues of the Court of France, she was supposed suddenly to learn the manners and customs, the twists and intrigues of the nobles of Scotland.

She may well, as the great, beautiful ship moved slowly through the mists of those August days, have thought with the deepest dismay of the future and remembered with shuddering terror her murdered ancestors. Or she may, as Heywood would have us believe, have regarded the future with some complacency and relied on her own high spirits, her youth and beauty, expecting that her easy and honest goodwill towards all would be easily and honestly returned.

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The English Queen and her counsellors also viewed the future of Scotland with much trepidation. The marriage of Elizabeth had already been long and anxiously debated. There was now the marriage of Queen Mary to consider. Who were to be the husbands of these rival Queens? Were they to continue to share the island between them, or was one destined to swallow the other? These questions agitated the minds of the Scotch and English, French and Spanish politicians as Mary sailed from France through the thick mist with her escort of French and

Scottish lords and ladies, with her girls and pages, her poets and lute players, her priests and servants.

On the 19th of August Mary landed at Leith, where her reception was cold (she arrived before she was expected) and where she could not contain her tears when she saw the ragged accoutrements of the Scotch cavalry that had been sent to the port side to welcome her. No doubt, however, she concealed her disappointment and her homesickness with the elegant grace for which she was famous.

Brantôme has left on record his disgust at her rude welcome, at "the uncouth howling" of the bagpipes that serenaded her, at the rough manners and appearance of the Scotch nobles.

On the 2nd of September Mary arrived in Edinburgh, where she was received with formal acclamations and rejoicings more or less sincere. For the heiress of their ancient Kings awoke at once a certain loyalty and a fitful affection in the hearts of the Scotch people, and there were some to cry out: "God bless that sweet face!" "La belle et douce reine" kept her countenance whatever her opinions, and outwardly indeed a smiling serenity.

She took up her abode in Holyrood Palace which stood just outside the red-roofed town of Edinburgh (which consisted of little more than one long street) and was surrounded by pleasant deer parks. She had then an ample if perilous opportunity to put in practice those gifts of prudence, wisdom, discretion, and tact with which she had been credited, and to prove the value of that charm, sweetness, and courtesy which had been so much admired.

Her brother, Lord James Stewart, just returned from his conference with Elizabeth, stood at once on her right hand as her principal adviser. She took also into her service Sir William Maitland of Lethington, who had been her mother's Secretary of State. Behind the Lord James was the Earl of Morton, a treacherous man of blood, and a furious Protestant. Others who stood ready to give her advice and expected to be taken immediately into her favour were the Earl of Argyll, who had married her half-sister, George Gordon Earl of Huntly, Chief of the Clan of Gordon, the Cock of the North, the Earl of Arran, feeble, arrogant, ambitious, with his claims to the throne of Scotland and to her hand or to that of Elizabeth, and a bewildering group of high-spirited, violent and brutal nobility each with his own interests to pursue, his own ambition and greed to satisfy,

each accomplished in double-edged intrigue and bloody warfare. Among these was already conspicuous Earl Bothwell, the faithful servant of Mary of Guise, the reckless, turbulent Border chieftain, Protestant, but loyal. Among Mary's fiercest enemies was John Knox, chief maker of the Reformation in Scotland, with a personality of a ferocious vigour, of a boundless intolerance, of a fearless ardour, and from the first the Queen's implacable opponent; he was then firmly established in Edinburgh.

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On the first Sunday of her residence in Holyrood, Mass was said in the chapel (the church which was also the burial place of the Kings and Queens of Scotland, was partially destroyed by the English and wholly in the hands of the Reformers), and Lord Lindsay, husband of the Queen's half-sister, clad in steel and with a rout behind him, attacked the priest. "This is a fair commencement of what I have to expect!" exclaimed Mary. The Lord James, who had made her so many specious promises in France, thereupon procured her some degree of toleration for her faith, but this was sullenly and reluctantly granted.

Thus one account; Thomas Randolph, Elizabeth's acute, loyal and industrious Ambassador in Edinburgh, gives another, under date September 21st:

"Sunday, the 8th of September, the Earl of Argyll and the Lord James so disturbed the Queen during Mass that some priests and others left their places with broken heads and bloody ears."

This Randolph was the adroit English agent who had smuggled Arran into Scotland, and his dispatches are a main source for the life of Mary while she was reigning in Edinburgh.

His relations of events that are not to her credit have been vehemently discredited by her partisans, and he may have been, on some points, misinformed, and picked up, now and then, worthless gossip. He was, however, an eye witness of most of what he writes and one profoundly interested. There seem no grounds for the accusation that he purveyed highly coloured libels of Mary to please Elizabeth's malice, and indeed, he seems to have had, at bottom, a compassionate nature, and to have admired the brilliant young Queen.

Whatever Mary's feelings at these early outrages on her faith, she refused to take offence; she had resolved to be prudent and tactful and to conciliate the Protestants. A tolerant, cautious course had probably been enjoined on her by her uncles, in

particular that of the Duc de Guise, then on the eve of his martial move against the Huguenots, whom he did not wish Elizabeth to help.

On September 1st she sent Maitland to Elizabeth with a diamond heart and other jewels; the English Queen responded with gifts and promises of friendship.

The following day took place Mary's state entry into Edinburgh, which was staged with a magnificence that showed that Scotch taste and means could compete with the magnificence of France.

Mary rode to Castle Hill, the four Maies behind her, under a canopy borne by sixteen men in black velvet, where she was met by a masque of fantasies in black and yellow silk blazing with gold and jewels, and paused before a globe which opened and showed a small child, who presented her with a Bible and a Psalter, with the keys of the gate, and made her an address of welcome. The allusion to "God's laws, His word and testament truly translated with fruitful diligence", cannot have been very acceptable to Mary. She must have been aware that the translation of the Bible and the immense popularity of the Psalms had been one of the main causes of the spread of the Reformation in Scotland, and she must have seen from the moment she set foot on Scottish soil evidences of the destruction of every trace of the religion to which she had been bred and which she held sacred. All traces of Romanism had been rooted out of Scotland with a ruthless hand, and the fact that it was suggested that "a priest should be burnt on the altar" to welcome Mary ("the Earl of Huntly stayed that pageant", adds Randolph), even though this may have been in grim jest, shows the brutality with which the Reformers dealt with the idolaters.

At the Cross were fair girls clad in white and fountains spouting wine, at the Netherbow a dragon was burnt and a psalm sung, at Holyrood was a banquet; all was outwardly smooth and fair, but Knox, to whom "one Mass was more terrible than ten thousand armed men", was waiting to be heard.

Mary, in return for these courtesies, made two concessions, she dismissed many of her French servants and issued a Proclamation in which she declared her intention of "maintaining the Protestant religion." She must have made this declaration either with cynical indifference or with angry shame; it placated

but did not re-assure her Protestant subjects. Despite the pageantry, the addresses of welcome, the cries of "God bless that sweet face," the majority of the Scotch viewed this young Frenchwoman, as she seemed, with suspicion and distrust.

More powerful and more remarkable than any man in Scotland was John Knox, this gnarled prophet, herald and symbol of the Reformation in Scotland. He was then fifty-five years old and had led an adventurous life. Educated at St. Andrcws he was ordained a priest, but was soon suspected of heresy; he said that Cardinal Beaton employed *bravi* to assassinate him, and he certainly had encouraged the murderers of that priest.

While Mary had been pursuing her peaceful education in France John Knox had been busy fomenting rebellion in Scotland, which he had visited five years or so before Mary's return, after having paid several more visits to Geneva, during one of which he had probably helped in the production of the Geneva Bible; there he had published his "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment of Women." The main principle of this pamphlet was a defence of the Salic Law which allowed no woman to reign.

He decided finally to make his domicile in Scotland for the rest of his life and landed at Leith in May, 1559. The religious disturbances roused on his arrival this time culminated in the demolition of the Romish monasteries and churches. It is doubtful, however, whether Knox can be altogether blamed for this wanton destruction, which he himself blamed on to "the rascals, the multitude". The ardent Reformer was, therefore, in the full blaze of his triumph when Queen Mary landed, and was firmly installed in Edinburgh as the idol of the populace and the main prop of the Protestant Faith.

Mary must, before she had even seen him, have hated and disdained this man who had so harassed her mother. He was accused, and the Queen would be ready to believe the charge, of magical arts. Earl Bothwell and Lord Ruthven were also said to be wizards. In Scotland these universal beliefs in sorcery mingled with wild and beautiful superstitions, the traditions of fairy lore, the legends of ghosts and firedrakes, fays and mandrakes, kelpies and demons.

The magnificent ballads of Scotland, as fine a heritage as is embodied in the folklore of any country, bear witness to the poetic mystic feelings of the people, to their ideas of grandeur

and honour, to their belief in what cannot be seen or heard but only sensed.

John Knox and the Calvinists in his train, though themselves accused of casting spells, were from the first bitter enemies to the world of fairy and romance, of song and dance. There was to be no music, there was to be no beauty, there was to be no wit or love-making or singing of ballads or writing of profane sonnets; the Bible and the Psalms were alone to be studied.

A sermon delivered publicly by Knox immediately after Mary's arrival in her capital, was full of virulent hatred against all the young Queen represented. The grim and bitter Puritan insulted without pity the young woman's religion, sex, and adopted country. Stung, perhaps a little bewildered, a little curious, Mary sent for John Knox to Holyrood Palace. Perhaps she hoped to quieten and silence him by the means of that "alluring grace" which Elizabeth's emissary afterwards declared so hard to resist; she certainly hoped, by concession, to win the Protestants back to their loyalty.

The story goes that John Knox was asked if he were not afraid to venture into the presence of the Queen whom he had given so much cause to dislike him. He replied: "Why should I be afraid of the pleasing face of a gentlewoman who has looked undaunted into the countenances of angry men?" Mary also was fearless. She disputed adroitly with her redoubtable opponent. At the back of all her arguments must have been a malicious amusement at this type of man, the amazed impossibility of comprehending his point of view.

John Knox was not touched by the youth, charms, and forlorn position of the young Queen. He detested her and all she stood for, to him she was an abomination, a trap, a snare, a Jezebel, a Delilah, the scarlet woman—"Venus, and all her crew." Yet this violent Protestant was not altogether impervious to the allurements of "the pleasing face of a gentlewoman". When well stricken in years he married a maiden of sixteen and his enemies at once declared that it was his art of wizardry that had induced so youthful a bride to accept his austere affections.

Randolph's hearsay account of this interview is as follows:

"Mr. Knox spoke last Thursday to the Queen: he knocked so heartily upon her heart that he made her weep; for that will do as well for anger as for grief."

Mary was always ready with her tears—if she shed them on

this occasion, it was probably because she saw how unlikely it was that any of her concessions, any of her graces, could conciliate the fanatic Protestants.

The feeling of the greater part of the populace was on the side of John Knox and not on that of the Queen, however much they might praise her in song and feast, and exclaim at her lovely face and gentle ways. The Stewart Queen was, in a fashion, only in Scotland on sufferance; the Lords, triumphant since the signing of the Treaty of Edinburgh, were *de facto* rulers. Yet so far Mary had deserved nothing but admiration, respect, and loyalty, even in the eyes of those watching her so jealously. She must have appeared in the eyes of all as of unblemished reputation, and spotless integrity.

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As she took up her residence in the ancient palace of her fathers which she at once adorned with the rich appointments, the gorgeous ornaments brought from France or collected by her mother, surrounded by her French singing boys and girls, her liveried servants, her elegant minstrels and poets, in all exquisite, graceful and beautiful, Scotland might well have felt flattered in the person of the young Queen. Her first New Year in Scotland as Queen Regnant was celebrated by many warm addresses of welcome among which the following, by Alexander Scott, is characteristic of these praises which were soon to read like irony. It is in something the style of the far better verses written by the great William Dunbar in 1503, to greet Mary's grandmother, Margaret Tudor, on her marriage to James IV.

*Welcome, illustrate lady and our Queen;
Welcome our Lion with the Fleur-de-lys,
Welcome our Thistle with the Lorraine green,
Welcome our rubent Rose upon the Riss,
Welcome our Gem and joyful Genetrice,
Welcome our Belle of Albion to bear,
Welcome our pleasant princess, maist of pricel
God give you grace against this good New Year."*

Mary took up her residence in the massive tower at Holyrood, built by her grandfather and embellished by her father; her mother had had the chamber of presence adorned by the heraldic devices of the Houses of Lorraine and Valois, in honour of the marriage that had been so flattering and so brief. These rooms, neither very large nor magnificent, were to become objects of avid curiosity and intense interest through circumstances that

the young Queen, when she furnished them, could never have guessed. Nothing of sinister portent could have forewarned her of the tragedies and shames to come so swiftly.

In a garden so green in a May-morning
Heard I my lady plain of paramours.
Said she: "My love so sweet, come you not yet, not yet?
Come you not to meet me among the flowers?
Eloré, Eloré, Eloré, Eloré,
I lose my lusty love, Eloré, Io!"

This Scots song, written long before Mary's birth, may have mingled with the French lyrics that enlivened the sombre apartments of Holyrood. It is pleasant to suppose, when much that surrounded the young Queen was so dark and vile, that she may also have listened to the other exquisite old verses that begin:

The gowans are gay, my Jo,
The gowans are gay,
They make me wake, when I should sleep
The first morning of May.

There is not much hint in Mary's life story of the Scotland revealed in the superb balladry of the country, in the noble poetry of William Dunbar or Sir David Lindsay, but in following the sordid and bloody chronicle of her reign, which seems incredibly ugly and vile in almost every detail, it should be kept in mind that the national spirit had from earliest times expressed itself in the most delicate, mystical and unearthly verse as well as in murders, intrigues, lusts and brawls. The spirituality of the people is preserved for us in these few precious fragments of poetry without which we might have supposed that Mary Stewart had come to rule over a nation composed of self seekers, men of blood and bitter fanatics.

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Whatever Mary's private feelings she left no doubt as to her public intentions. In her anxiety to please the Protestants she sent to prison forty-eight priests for saying Mass in secret and impeached the Bishop of Dunkeld for trying to administer the sacrament (Easter, 1561). She also claimed for the Crown one-third of the confiscated Church revenues. These actions could scarcely have been pleasing to the Pope who had, with such enthusiasm, sent her the Golden Rose, but no doubt her co-religionists in Europe understood that the Queen of Scotland was acting on a necessary and distasteful policy.

Part II

SCOTLAND

1561—1567

“ When thou art spoiled, what wilt thou do? Though thou clothest thyself with crimson, though thou deckest thyself with ornaments of gold, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair; thy lovers will despise thee, they will seek thy life. . . .
“ For I heard a voice as of a woman in travail . . . saying Woe is me now! for my soul is wearied because of murderers.”

The Prophet Jeremiah.

II

SCOTLAND

1561—1567

IMMEDIATELY after her interview with Knox the Queen set out on a progress to Inverness, which northern city she reached on September 11th, 1561.

Whatever impressions Mary may have received of the Scottish countryside, then vivid in heather and autumn foliage, she could not fail to have observed with a pang the devastation wrought by the Reformers' hands. The zeal of the Puritans had not fallen lightly upon Scotland. Such monks and priests and Romanists as had survived the zeal of the followers of John Knox were in disguise or poverty, most were slain, in prison, or in exile. The Churches had not only been violently divested of their riches, but had been ruined and overturned. Monasteries, priories, and nunneries, for centuries the seats of learning, piety, and charity, had been ruthlessly demolished. Mary must have seen many such a ruin rising stark against the autumnal sky, heard many a tale of wrong and suffering endured by the Romanists at the hands of the Puritans. She must have heard the scandalized comments on the part of her French followers as to the excesses of Scotch Puritans, and when the rich cavalcade came to a pause for repose or refreshment, or halted for the night, the young Queen, closeted with her women and her pages, must surely have given way to many expressions of sorrow and indignation. But outwardly she seems to have maintained a policy of silence. We do not at least hear of any comments she made on the disrespect and brutality with which her religion had been treated.

The Protestants on their side returned this, at least outward tolerance, by not interfering with her priests, her Masses, or any of the elaborate ceremonial of the ancient Faith that she took

with her wherever she went, though this toleration was extended with a bad grace.

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We hear much of the wildness of Scotland at this period, of the savagery of the inhabitants, and of the great distinction there was in point of civilization between Scotland and England, the difference being yet more marked, of course, between Scotland and France. It is, however, a little difficult to believe that Scotland was so far behind Europe in what was then termed civilization. Part of the country, the north, and the islands, was certainly wild and uncultivated and inhabited by what the city dwellers contemptuously termed "savages"—but might not the same have been said of the outlying districts of most countries?

Even the largest cities were comparatively small, Edinburgh having only forty thousand inhabitants compared to nearly half-a-million in London. Nor can we doubt that the ways of the country people were rude, their customs crude, their actions lawless and violent, and that the cities were unsanitary and filthy. But again much the same could be said of any country in the middle of the sixteenth century. In London and Paris, in Madrid and Rome, the most exquisite luxuries, the most studied sophistication on the part of the aristocracy went side by side with dirt, disease, and savagery on the part of the lower orders, with which there were none but feeble attempts to cope.

Scotland was poor despite the boast that wealth flowed after Bannockburn, and her people were lawless, the centres of education were few. Many of the nobility could not afford art or learning, luxury, or even comfort, but there is abundant evidence that the travelled, educated Scots gentleman was second to none in refinement, polish, and brilliancy of achievements. All the members of the House of Stewart, as we have seen, were, according to the standards of their different periods, highly educated and the equal of their peers in Europe. James I loved letters "with an incredible warmth and indulged in singing and poesy, in harping and in other honest policies of great pleasure and disport". James IV, Mary's grandfather, was a prince who would have graced the most finished Court. In Mary's own time such Scotsmen who were educated and who had travelled and received French elegance and grace, were courtiers, scholars, and statesmen equal to any in Europe. The love of culture and letters was easily evoked in this people. Remote as was their dwelling and poor as were their means their natural intelligence

made them eagerly assimilate knowledge and manners. When Alexander Stewart, the natural son of James IV, Archbishop of St. Andrews and Primate of Scotland in his thirteenth year, perished on Flodden Field before he was twenty, Erasmus, who had been his tutor and patron, wrote a lament on his early loss extolling him as a prodigy of learning.

Sir David Lindsay, who had died a few years before Mary's return to Scotland and had been attached to the Court of her father, was the most popular poet of the Scottish people. He was Lyon Herald and often sent as an envoy abroad; apart from his considerable talents as a poet he had the wit and courage to address (in the "Monarchia") the following lines to his pupil, Mary's father :

"Therefore since thou hast such capacity,
To learn to play so pleasantly and sing,
Ride horses, use spears with great audacity,
Shoot with handbow, crossbow and culvering,
Among the rest, sir, learn to be a King."

The hunting lodge of James V in Atholl is pleasantly described by Robert Lindsay (1529); it was strewn with fresh flowers, hung "with fine tapestry within and well lighted in all necessary parts with glass windows". So, in the chronicles of Scotland from the earliest times are evidences of luxury and taste on the part of the nobility and the high intelligence and ardent spirit of the people that went far to balance their poverty and their geographical position.¹

Among Mary's own contemporaries, her brother, Maitland, and men like Cardinal Beaton stand out conspicuously as accomplished gentlemen, adroit politicians, and able scholars.

As to "the savages," whose costume Mary put on to amuse the exquisites in Paris, the reference is probably to the Highlanders and to the inhabitants of the islands. Rude and unlettered these may have been and given to bloody deeds and acts of atrocious violence, but it is questionable whether they were in the strict sense of the word any more "savages" than those living in any remote part of any other country in Europe.

¹ In 1552 the celebrated Jerome Cardan had travelled from Milan to Edinburgh to doctor the Archbishop of St. Andrews (John Hamilton, bastard brother of Arran), and he declared the country civilized beyond his expectation. The Scotch nobles found large sums of gold with which to pay Cardan.

They had their own code, their own law, their own honour, and horrible as some of the deeds that they committed undoubtedly were, it must be remembered that the organized massacre of St. Bartholomew took place in the streets of sophisticated, elegant Paris and not in the wilds of the Scottish Highlands, and that as many murders, secret and open took place in the capitals of Europe as on the desolate tracts of the Scottish countryside. Life was cheap all over Europe, and murder—from simple assassination to wholesale massacre—was used definitely as a political weapon.

Judicial murder was also freely employed without excuse or remorse, and bloodstained though the annals of medieval and Renaissance Scotland may be, they can show nothing more horrible than the hacking to death of the aged Countess of Salisbury in the precincts of the Tower by order of Henry VIII merely because she was the last of the Plantagenets and the mother of Reginald de la Pole.

Since the marriage of Mary of Guise with James V intercourse between France and Scotland, "the Auld Alliance," had been continuous. Scottish nobles, gentlemen, and scholars brought home many comforts and elegances, many fashions and adornments from France. Handsome castles formed the residences of the lords and gentlemen; these had been developed from the early "mote and bailey" type into commodious, fortified residences, such as Caerlaverock, Bothwell, Morton and Dunderston, apart from the palace castles, such as Edinburgh, Stirling, Linlithgow, Falkland and Holyrood. Many of these had been built by French masons, and the ruins of over eight hundred remain.

We need not, then, consider that Mary had left an ultra-civilized country full of exotic gaieties and exquisite refinements for a rude land peopled by savages and semi-barbaric robber barons, though no doubt the contrast between St. Germain and Holyrood, between such a château as that of Chenonçau, the delicious palace built over the Loire, and that of the Castle at Inverness, must have been startling enough to Mary.

She made, however, no complaints; she had the charming gift of bringing grace and enthusiasm to commonplace affairs, she could discover what we should term "fun" in everything. Though the journeying in the north was rough and food scanty, she enjoyed it; she found pleasure in the long rides over the moors, she wished "she were a man to sleep on the heather

wrapped in a plaid with a dirk at her side". This has been taken as evidence of her robust health; but Mary seems never to have been strong, her endurance of fatigue and discomfort was that of a gracious woman, anxious to please, and she had that nervous force with which delicate, highly strung people are so often endowed.

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Though we have no record of Mary's thoughts at this period, it is easy to guess them. Troubled and perhaps bewildered as she must have been by politics and religious conflicts, she, a lovely girl, ardent and flattered, was probably more deeply concerned with her own personal affairs. She cannot have failed to mark, to consider and to judge, the men by whom she was surrounded, she must, she, the pupil of Ronsard, the adored of Brantôme, have dreamed of love, a passionate, all sufficing love. Her brief marriage can have awakened no more than her compassion for the poor boy to whom she had been united; she was heart free, "fancy free", unaroused, physically and spiritually. She had been ready to plan for another loveless marriage with Don Carlos (though she could not have guessed the miserable degenerate he was) and no doubt she was ready to make her marriage a matter of policy, but she was human and therefore she must have dwelt much on the thought of a lover—of lovers, perhaps. Despite the training of Antoinette de Bourbon, some knowledge of the profligate Court where Diane de Poictiers ruled must have come to her, she had likely enough heard of the private life of the great Cardinal who had been for so long her mentor, she had noticed Queen Elizabeth brave a foul scandal and still pose as virgin virtue, and she was aware, without any doubt, that piety could mask, and the Church forgive, the sins of the flesh.

She may, too, have realized that her position was of a cruel, a well nigh impossible difficulty, and that the only thing that could save her was the single-minded devotion, the implicit loyalty of an honourable and brave man, at once powerful, intelligent and unselfish.

Mary Stewart was never to find such a champion; few women since the fabled days of knight errantry have done so. Among the men by whom she was surrounded at her first coming into Scotland there was not one on whom she could implicitly rely. Neither her rank, her family, her sex, her youth, nor her beauty, nor her unprotected state, nor her kind

pretty ways roused in the breast of one man an unwavering loyalty, a wholehearted desire to protect and cherish this alluring and lonely girl. Every powerful man with whom she came in contact used her for his own ends of ambition, of self seeking, of greed, of malice; those willing to risk their fortunes for her, even to die for her, were humble folk, like Willie Douglas, and even of these there were not many. However potent her fascinations may have been they were not potent enough to induce one powerful man of her own caste to forsake his own interest for hers. Shrewd as she was she may, from the first, have sensed this and realized how forlorn was her position. Lord Bothwell she must have often seen and marked secretly the dangerous attractions of this lewd and reckless noble, but she gave no sign of any interest in him, and her two most trusty counsellors were her brother, soon created Earl of Mar (on the occasion of his marriage with Agnes Keith, daughter of the Earl Marischal, 1562) and Sir William Maitland of Lethington.

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The character of Mary herself, pupil of the Guises, product of the French Renaissance, daughter of Kings, begins to emerge from the moment she reaches Scotland. She was no longer in tutelage but she was the child of her training. Devout, gay, generous, enthusiastic, eager to please and be pleased, hoping for love and affection and to enjoy life, thinking evil of none but taught to use craft and tact, secretly homesick and lonely, clever, intelligent, able to hold her own in debate and argument, fond of music, the dance, poetry and song, of gorgeous clothes and rich jewels, there was, then at least, no harm in her, and if she did harm it was unwittingly and because she fell inevitably under the influence of the strong men who guided her councils. After her half-brother the most fascinating and attractive of these was one whom she took immediately into her confidence—Sir William Maitland of Lethington. This man represented what every epoch names “the modern spirit”, that is, he was a little in advance of his age and more in tune with the generation immediately to follow him than with his own. For this reason he was acceptable to Mary—they saw eye to eye in much. They appear, in the colloquial saying, to have “got on well” with each other; they understood and admired one another. Whether Maitland, known by the people of Scotland as “Mr. Michael

Wylie", a popular form of Macchiavelli, was always sincere in his loyalty to Mary, or whether he was from the first a traitor is still eagerly disputed. Despite intense researches and continuous debating of every aspect of his character the man remains an enigma, as, in so much, does Mary herself.

When the Queen returned to Scotland and Maitland entered her service he was thirty-five years of age, and though the son of but a humble poet and country gentleman, Sir Richard Maitland, had been in politics since his earliest years. He left the University of St. Andrews to complete his education on the Continent, and as early as 1558 had been secretary to Mary of Guise. He had, however, soon deserted both her and the Romish Faith, become a spokesman of the Protestant party, and even gone to England to plead their cause with the English Queen; he had also been Speaker to the Lords of the Congregation. Despite these dubious actions, which he was no doubt accomplished enough to be able to gloss over or to laugh away, he had easily ingratiated himself with Mary Stewart. Both his person, his address, and his intellect were supremely fascinating, and there were few who could resist him. He was a learned theologian, an accomplished, an easy and charming conversationalist; in business he was flexible, fertile, dexterous in extremity, always serene and astute. Whether he was more fickle and unprincipled than his contemporaries will always be a matter of dispute. His tortuous intrigues and endless double-dealings rose above mere politics and could be dignified by the name of statesmanship, for he had, what so many of his colleagues lacked, a large aim in view, one that must have seemed during his lifetime like the hope of a miracle to most people, but which was accomplished not so many years after his miserable death—this was the union, in peace and friendship, of the Crowns of England and Scotland.

Whether he was enchanted by Mary who must in much have been after his own tastes, whether he was a little, in a gallant and chivalrous fashion, in love with her, whether he at first sincerely and perhaps passionately desired her good and her aggrandizement we do not know. Like the Lord James, who distrusted and disliked him as a dangerous rival, but who used him whenever possible, he was credited with "looking through his fingers" at much that was discreditable or dangerous. There was nothing that he was not in, and

nothing that he was not soon out of. He perhaps saw in Mary his ideal Queen as Macchiavelli saw in Cæsar Borgia his ideal prince. This man was, during the whole of her reign, of supreme importance to Mary Stewart. He married one of the four Maries, Mary Fleming, as his second wife.

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Another man who was to leave his mark on these times and on the life of Mary was James Douglas, Earl of Morton, the son of Sir George Douglas who was brother to Archibald, Earl of Angus, second husband of Margaret Tudor. The long contention of the House of Douglas with the Throne had ended in the disgrace and exile of this James Douglas and the forfeiture of his estates to James V.

The young outlaw was thus brought up in exile, some say in disguise and hiding. On the death of James V, however, he returned to Scotland and founded his fortune by a marriage with a daughter of his namesake, James Douglas, third Earl of Morton, whose earldom and estates he soon inherited. In one of the Border fights, in which he showed himself a resolute soldier, he was captured and carried prisoner to England. In 1559, soon after his release, he embraced the Protestant Faith and enrolled himself as one of the most zealous of the Lords of Congregation. Mary had at once sworn him a member of her Privy Council.

It is difficult to believe that she can either have trusted or liked him, but his influence among the Protestants was immense, and this despite his odious disposition and dissolute life. To some historians he is a gallant Reformer, but it seems certain that he only joined the Protestant cause after he was sure that this was certain of English aid. He was attractive in nothing; avaricious, profligate (at one time living in open adultery with the widow of an unhappy Captain Cullen whom he had caused to be executed), sullen, sulky, given to fits of fury, often enclosing himself in his house and disclosing his mind to none. With all his vile ways and ugly manners he was yet one of the godly and could affect upon occasion a sanctimonious and puritanical air.

His hair and beard were of foxy red, his face puffy and insignificant, while he affected the high-crowned puritanical hat and black or sober clothes. Nothing good seems ever to have been known of him, and he had no graces or accomplishments to disguise his vices and his villainies. He was a strong,

able man and met his long deferred punishment with a good grace.

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Of some importance in the story of Mary was one of the scoundrels who were more or less in Morton's pay and who kept him constant company—Archibald Douglas, who had been educated before the Reformation for the priesthood—a clever, educated man, not without some address and charm, but totally unscrupulous, a go-between, a catspaw, a jackal.

Another blatant Protestant was John Wood, secretary to the Lord James, and to him what Archibald Douglas was to Morton. He had not, perhaps, much influence in the Court, but he was the mouthpiece of the Puritans in the clamour against both French frivolity and Romish idolatry as represented in the graceful person of Mary.

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Among the young Queen's flatterers when she first arrived in Scotland was George Buchanan, poet, historian and distinguished Latin scholar, who praised Mary with mechanical fulsomeness. He had become old, fat, and careless, and was to do her immense harm, perhaps more from zeal than from malice.

The other bearers of great Scottish names, Huntly, Argyll, Kirkcaldy of Grange, the Melvilles, the Hamiltons, must have remained to Mary and to many others for some time but names so carefully were their intentions and their projects concealed behind their conventional courtesies.

It must be emphasized that there was not one among these men (with the possible exception of Maitland) who was inspired by any spiritual ideals nor controlled by any code of honour, such religion as they had was compounded of superstition, bigotry and blind fanaticism, and their entire conduct was regulated by their rapacity, their lusts, their greed for self advancement.

When the Black Laird of Ormiston, one of Bothwell's followers, came to be hanged he declared: "Within these seven years I never saw two good men nor one good deed, but all kinds of wickedness—I have been most high minded (i.e., arrogant) and most filthy of my body."

This confession would have come truthfully from most of these nobles and their followers; the seven years might read seventy-seven and still be true.

Nor were such characters peculiar to Scotland, they could be matched in any country of Europe; Scotland had no monopoly of scoundrels. But no such counsellor as Cecil, no such servants as Walsingham or Throckmorton, who made their Sovereign's cause their own, stood behind Mary Stewart.

It is curious to find, among this welter of ruffianism, of vice, of self seeking, of bloodshed, the words "honour", "chastity", "loyalty" and "godliness" bandied about—whence came any acquaintance with such abstractions? And what dim realization of other values than those of this world caused these lawless men to mask, however casually, their deeds with the names of virtues they never tried to emulate nor seemed to understand?

Mary, of course, was supposed, by some odd convention, to keep herself untainted amid this corruption. Both as Queen and woman she was to be spotless—but no man among them was prepared to risk anything to keep her so. Her purity and her honour had no support save that of her own feeble strength and what help she might find in her Faith to keep them from sinking into the pit which gaped around her inexperienced feet.

The standard for this girl was as high as that for the men was low; Knox, who was friends with men like Morton and Bothwell, who had lived with the murderers of Cardinal Beaton, nevertheless saw in Mary's most innocent amusements the stamp of infamy and preached furiously against "the stinking pride of woman"—"their targetted tails" and denounced Mary's love of singing and dancing as if these had been deadly crimes, while he accused her bitterly of "craft". The young Queen, thus placed, thus surrounded, thus denounced, needed all the craft that she could summon, and if she learned something of the guile, something of the outlook, something, maybe, of the morals of those among whom she was forced to live, let it be remembered that there was no good man among them—"no, not one".

Among those who listened with secret satisfaction to John Knox's denunciation of feminine rule was the Lord James. The application of the Salic Law to Scotland would not have been displeasing to this ambitious man. Illegitimate as he was, he might, in the event of Mary being deposed, have

considered himself as standing in the place of next heir to the Throne; and he knew himself superior in ability and in power to any of the rival claimants of the House of Hamilton or Lennox. No doubt he agreed secretly with John Knox that women, especially women of the type of his sister, were unfitted to rule, that Protestant Scotland could only be reduced to law and order, peace and prosperity under the strong rule of a strong prince.

In a curious little account of Queen Mary written in the reign of her son, James Stewart's attitude is clearly expressed. The author, William Stravenage, who wrote this first history of Mary Stewart, cannot, for obvious reasons, be relied upon, but his description of her half-brother's attitude in this period appears to be so reasonably like the truth that it is worth quoting :

"In the year of Our Lord, one thousand five hundred and fifty-eight, at the marriage of Francis, the Dauphin, and Mary, Queen of Scots, James, the Queen's bastard brother commonly called the Prior of St. Andrews, disdaining that religious appellation sued for a more honourable title, which when she by the advices of the Guises, her uncles, would not grant, he returned into Scotland much offended and began to make broils under the goodly pretence of the Reformation of religion and assuring the liberty of Scotland and effected it so far that the religion was changed and the Frenchmen removed out of Scotland by the help of the Englishmen he had brought in.

"Francis the King of France being deceased, he (meaning James Stewart) posted into France unto his sister and laying from himself whatsoever had been done in Scotland against her profit or credit, calling God to witness, solemnly promised to do all the kind offices which a sister could expect from the hands of a brother.

"Perceiving also a hope that she, being bred up from her tender years in a delightful throne would not return to Scotland, he dealt with the Guises that someone of the Scottish nobility might be named Regent of Scotland and with his finger showed himself as the fittest man. When he was sent back into Scotland with no other authority but letters patent wherein the Queen gave him authority to assemble the nobility and to advise and to confer about the good of the Commonwealth, he, being dejected and frustrated in hope returning to England in a rage and fury put into their heads that if they desired or had a care of the preservation of religion in Scotland, the tranquillity of England, the security of Queen Elizabeth, they should hinder the return of the Queen of Scotland into Scotland by one means or other.

" Yet she arrived safe in Scotland, passing safe by the English Fleet in a thick mist and using her brother with all courtesy commanding the government of all the affairs into his hands."

Stravenage's next passage about James Stewart, though making him too definitely the villain of the piece, yet may be true enough.

" Yet these things did not cut off the branches of his ambition which daily sprang out both in word and deed, for neither could he contain himself, but oft-times amongst his friends he would lament that the war-like Scottish nation no less than that of the English men, were subjected to the government of a woman and, out of the doctrine of Knox, whom he accounted as a patriot, he would often discourse that kingdoms were due under virtue, not under kindred, that women were to be excluded from the Succession of kingdoms, that their rule was monstrous.

" He dealt also with the Queen saying that he would substitute some out of the family of the Stewarts, who if she died without issue would succeed one after another in the kingdom, and not perhaps any regard whether they were legitimate or illegitimate, hoping that he should be one of them being a king's son though illegitimate."

Later on Stravenage says that the Lord James bragged he was the lawful son of James V though it is difficult to see how he could have possibly seriously put forward such a claim.

The same history tells us that Morton was " a profound, subtle man, a cunning man to breed discontent ". He certainly was behind Lord James Stewart from whom doubtless he expected preference and reward.

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When Mary returned to Holyrood from her progress to the north (she had fainted in the streets of Perth, after receiving a gold heart-shaped casket full of gold pieces) she fell ill, perhaps from chagrin and disappointment. For she must have felt day by day the prospect cloud more dismally ahead, seen deeper difficulties beset her way. Yet she could be gay enough to give offence to John Knox and the Puritans. She did not forego, we know, her dances or her music, her songs, nor her gaily apparelled retinue. The question of her marriage was debated in London. She gave no sign where her choice would lie. She would hunt and ride, shoot at the butts, play golf, take her embroidery to the Council chamber, be affectionate with her woman, gracious with her servants, and, diligent as she was in

business, shut herself away in the evenings in the galleries of Holyrood, with her French girls and boys, her lutanists, her games, her sewing, her merry gossip, her melancholy moods. In May, 1560, she had written to her aunt, Anne, Duchess of Guise, of her "*continuels troubles et fascteries*". *

Affairs between herself and Elizabeth were at a deadlock under the gloss of presents and courtesies; Mary would not ratify the Treaty of Edinburgh, Elizabeth, burdened as she was by the tedious pros and cons of her own future marriage, interfered in that of her cousin of Scotland, refusing resolutely to countenance the match for Mary put forward by the Cardinal of Lorraine, that of the Archduke Charles, a suitor who had been offered to Queen Elizabeth herself. Both the Queens were harassed, exasperated, and hardly knew where to turn amid these intricate questions of the marriages, the succession to the two kingdoms, the foreign alliances, and the holding of the balances between the Papists and the Reformers. Neither could be sure of the mind and intentions of the other; the main policy of Elizabeth was to prevent any possible marriage on the part of Mary that would be dangerous to England, and the main policy of Mary was to secure the recognition of herself as heiress to the English throne.

Soon after Mary's return from the north (October, 1561) she was roused by finding that her concessions towards the Reformers had not evoked gentle returns. During her absence John Knox and his followers had inspired the magistrates of Edinburgh to put on the Romish Queen a coarse insult in the form of a Proclamation.

This brutal document ordered "all monks, friars, priests, nuns, adulterers, such filthy persons to remove themselves out of the town within twenty-four hours". The penalty for these people who, in the Proclamation, are referred to as "the wicked rabble of the anti Christ the Pope" was to be "carting through the town, burning on the cheek, and perpetual banishment".

Mary's retort to this was to order the Town Council to dismiss the Provost and bailiffs from office, and this was done, apparently with the cautious backing of the Lord James, and the zealous Knox and his followers were checked though not for long. This exercise of power on the part of the Queen increased the danger of her position. Knox wrote bitterly to Cecil that "Satan groweth bold" and that "levity and dulciness" were

not to be used towards those who protected the “ whoremongers, adulterers and idolaters ”.

Knox feared that the Queen was too truly the pupil of her uncle the Cardinal, and addcd that “ in communication with her I espied such craft as I have not found before in such an age ”.

The next month the faithful Randolph, who had no sympathy whatever with the Papists, wrote :

“ It is now called in question, whether the Queen, being an idolatress, may be obeyed in all civil and political actions.”

The Lords might have considered this nice point before inviting Mary to return. Randolph evidently thought the nation over which a young woman was endeavouring to rule, difficult and wilful, for he adds piously :

“ I think marvels of the wisdom of God, that gave this stout, unruly and cumbersome people no more power and substance than they have, for then they would run wild.”

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Earl Bothwell was responsible for the next troubles of Mary's reign. He must have come prominently under her notice in the December of the year of her arrival in Scotland for his sister then married the Lord John Stewart, brother of the Lord James Stewart, titular Earl of Mar, who was himself married to Lady Agnes Keith, daughter of the Earl Marischal, soon afterwards. Both these marriages were occasions of sumptuous rejoicings in Holyrood. At the last of them Queen Mary graciously toasted the Queen of England and gave the golden goblet out of which she had drunk to Thomas Randolph; the Queens had already exchanged valuable presents and elaborate compliments.

Early in the new year, about March, the affairs of the country being outwardly at peace, Mary went to Falkland, a palace favoured by James II and his Dutch Queen, for outdoor exercise, hunting and hawking. Although she had her languors and could lie in the French fashion clad in silks for days together in the downy cushions of her luxurious bed “ for the ease of her body ”, she was often active with an almost feverish vitality. She seems to have made no complaint of those long and difficult journeys which Randolph, who sometimes had to accompany her, bitterly described as “ tiresome for man and beast ” by reason of the rough ways and the poor food.

As soon as Mary had left Edinburgh, the Earl Bothwell,

whose dissolute habits had attracted unsavourable attention and who had, therefore, left the capital, returned and renewed his old quarrels with the Earl of Arran, who, irresolute, exasperated and disappointed in his pretensions to the hand of Elizabeth, was dangling round Holyrood in the hope of winning Mary's favour and possibly securing her as his wife. Lord Bothwell and the Marquis D'Elboeuf, Mary's uncle, had brawled in the streets of Edinburgh before the house of a woman who was supposed to be distinguished by Arran's regard, and on Bothwell's return to Edinburgh, this and other disputes was taken up, but before the quarrels with Arran could come to a head, Bothwell turned his attention to his other foe, Cockburn of Ormiston, the "Black Laird" from whom he had robbed the English gold two years previously, and kidnapped his son and imprisoned him in Crichton Castle.

Randolph's account of this episode throws a piquant light on the life of the Scotch nobles of the sixteenth century. He wrote on March 31st, 1562 :

" In these days, Earl Bothwell with eight in company lieth again in wait for the Lord of Ormiston . . . the Lord with his wife and eldest son . . . was out hunting; they all turned back when they saw the danger, into a little town belonging to them; only the son, who ventured out to see what was going on, was made prisoner, but set at liberty in the sequel. This fact miscontented the whole country, in special the Queen and her council."

René, Marquis D'Elboeuf, Bothwell's companion in the onset of these troubles, did not conduct himself in Scotland with the dignity and discretion that might have been expected from a Prince. He even exceeded the " beastly liberty " that Sir Ralph Sadler complained of in the Scots gentry, and the Assembly of the Kirk (the Reformed Clergy) complained strongly of his riotous behaviour in the streets of Edinburgh. On one occasion " ten men were scarce able to hold him " and he was the centre of many brawling causeway scuffles. When D'Elboeuf left Scotland he had further disgusted the Puritans by the fact that a certain "*Marguerite Chrestian, demoiselle Ecossaise*" was the mother of his illegitimate son.

Earl Bothwell, after this futile exploit, turned his attention to a grandiose scheme, but one that was, like all his intrigues, reckless and ill judged.

Weary, as he declared, of the costly and dangerous feud with

Arran, he called upon Knox, whose ancestors had been in the service of his family, to reconcile him with the feeble, unstable, and irritable Hamilton, who had no importance beyond his position as first prince of the Blood.

When the Earl interviewed the Reformer in his handsome house in the main street of Edinburgh, that still remains as one of the few relics of the sixteenth century Scotland, he "lamented his former inordinate life" and in particular complained of the pass to which this, that had raised up so many bitter foes, had brought him. His chief trouble was the cost of the armed bodyguard he had to keep about his person. "I would wait upon the Court", declared the Earl regretfully, "with a page and few servants where now I am compelled to keep for my own safety, a number of wicked and unprofitable men to the utter destruction of my living that is left."

It might have been supposed that the straightlaced Reformer would have found the Earl "wicked and unprofitable", but Knox found it "the obligation of our Scottish kindness" to do his best for the man under whose family standards his own ancestors had fought and died. He had never seen the wild, elegant soldier before, but he was "sorry at heart for the troubles I have heard you to be involved in".

Knox, who put the cause of the Reformation before anything, was also willing enough for that reason to bring together these two Protestant leaders. They met at the new mansion of Hamilton's father, Châtelherault, in Kirk o' field, and some form of reconciliation was gone through. Bothwell was, of course, not playing straight; he hated and despised Arran, why is not clear, and had determined, one way or another, to make an end of him. In pursuance of this scheme he suggested to the weak nobleman that they should between them abduct Mary, imprison her in Hamilton's castle of Dumbarton, slay Mar (the Lord James) and Lethington, and rule Scotland between them; whether Mary was to be shared also, or who was to marry her, does not appear.

Arran took this wild plan to Knox, who prudently advised him to say nothing about it, but Arran, although he already gave symptoms of unsettled wits, was still cunning enough to guess that this fantastic scheme was a plot to entrap him into some treason that Bothwell would afterwards betray, and disregarding Knox's advice, wrote to the Queen and her brother, acquainting them with Bothwell's designs, and then fled into

Fife. Mar, however, seized him and brought him to Mary at Falkland.

Earl Bothwell, with his usual reckless courage, also hastened to the Queen and made an utter denial of Arran's startling charges, declaring that that prince was insane, and that his statement was a farrago of absurdities.

The Duke of Châtelherault, Arran's father, also declared that his son was distracted and that no attention should be paid to his words. The fact, however, that the unhappy Earl was, for the last forty years of his life a hopeless lunatic, is no good reason for disbelieving his charge against Bothwell, who at that moment was in a desperate crisis of his fortunes, partially ruined and disgraced, audacious, reckless, insolent, and arrogant. It may well have occurred, not only to him, but to several of his fellow nobles, that the most effectual way to settle the question of the Queen's marriage and to secure the crown matrimonial of Scotland would be to abduct Mary and either to so ruin or to compromise her that she would be forced into a marriage with her ravisher.

It is, obviously, not likely that Bothwell would have involved Arran in any such scheme, even in the capacity of a cat's-paw; he had perhaps hoped to compromise him and to get him imprisoned or perhaps executed for treason, and thus rid himself of a dangerous rival.

Whether Mary believed Bothwell or Arran, how far she was shocked and offended, indifferent, or merely amused, how she listened to the pleas of Bothwell before her in Falkland, we do not know.

"The Queen," Randolph wrote, "both stoutly and honestly behaved herself."

The affair was obscure, but alarming, some plot there was and Bothwell was at the bottom of it, without doubt.

"Bothwell and Arran have been examined, but have confessed nothing. Arran will tell the truth only on certain conditions: the Queen will receive no such conditions. Arran assured me that the whole was fantasies."

Fantasies or no, Mar thought prison the best place for the disputants.

Either on her own initiative or acting on her brother's advice, Mary decided against Bothwell. He was confined in Edinburgh Castle, while Arran's father, who had been implicated in the charge, was deprived of Dumbarton Castle.

Mary's poor judgment of character is revealed again and again in important periods of her life; had she possessed a modicum of this gift, she would have hardly trusted Bothwell again after this business. She may have been rather fascinated by the bold escapade—above all she admired courage and reckless daring, and the Earl's personal graces and fascinations when he stood before her at Falkland may have condoned in her eyes the odious charges brought against him.

On the other hand, Bothwell would have had a further opportunity of studying the character of the Queen. Six years younger than he was, fair, and ardent—"a woman, therefore, to be wooed, a woman, therefore, to be won"—this no doubt summed up the scrupulous prisoner's opinion of his Sovereign, as he lay, thinking over the future, carelessly guarded in Edinburgh Castle.

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Mary, probably acting under advice from France, had definitely decided on what she supposed would be the settled policy of her reign. Though her inclinations must have turned, even passionately towards France and the Roman Catholic Faith, all her interests lay in conciliating the Protestants and in an alliance with England.

The only two men among her Council whose advice could be seriously regarded—Mar and Maitland—were agreed as to this. They, and Mary herself, hoped that by conciliating Elizabeth, the Scotch Queen and her possible children might be recognized as heirs to the English throne. Here was a more dazzling, at the same time a more solid prospect, than could be offered by any alliance with France, the Guises, or Spain. Mary realized also that she could hope for nothing more in Scotland than a scanty measure of toleration for her co-religionists. On this point the Scotch nobles, and in particular Mar, Lethington, and Morton, were firm. Some of them were sincerely attached to the Reformed Faith and all of them were gorged with Church lands which nothing would induce them to relinquish.

Mary had, therefore, to endure a compromise, and to trust to the loyalty, the sagacity, and policy of the moderate Protestants. She went so far in concession as to issue a Proclamation which declared that anyone taking part in Roman Catholic worship might be punished by death. The sole privilege she was allowed was that of holding Mass in her private chapel in

Holyrood. When soon after the Papal Nuncio was smuggled into Scotland he had to see Mary privately, in a humiliating secrecy, while the subtle and accommodating Maitland kept the door, lest any of his more vigilant colleagues should discover the presence of the hated Romanist.

Randolph, Elizabeth's Ambassador and spy, discovered the incident and related it in one of his dispatches, which shows how well Elizabeth was served and how little of what passed in Mary's household escaped the vigilance of the English emissaries.

The Papal messenger had come to ask Mary if she wished to send a representative to the Council of Trent. While Mary was thus hardly able to obtain even personal toleration inside her own palace, Elizabeth was interfering in France, perceiving no doubt, as Throckmorton suggested, "how dangerous it is to suffer Papists that be of great heart and enterprise, to lift their crests so high", and was offering underhand aid to the Huguenots under the rebellious Condé. Maitland, always adroit and imaginative, hoped at this period to arrange an interview between the Queens which might settle for ever the tedious question of the English Succession. Some thought that such a meeting would have been a mistake, that it would have roused further feminine jealousy—Mary being envious of Elizabeth's state and splendour, Elizabeth being envious of Mary's youth and beauty. But Maitland, about the cleverest man in the two kingdoms, was probably right in believing that the two women in a personal interview would have found much in common and that each might have understood and sympathized with the other's peculiar position and come to some kind of amicable pact.

He felt that he could trust Mary to be subservient, tactful and gracious, and that Elizabeth, once her bold humours and capricious tempers were exhausted, might have found it to her interest as well as her pleasure, to offer genuine friendship to the young Queen of Scotland.

At one moment it seemed that Elizabeth might have agreed to such a meeting, but the trouble with France, "the lets and hindrance of foreign parts being beyond her power to remedy", as she put it, prevented, and for ever, any such interview taking place.

Mary was deeply disappointed; however she regarded the supposed Arran-Bothwell plot, she must have placed little confidence in the loyalty of her nobles, and even felt dubious as to

her personal safety, and her dearest hopes then lay fixed on a stable alliance with England.

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Elizabeth was still amusing Europe by her subtle policy with Robert Dudley. She had told De Quadra, with an oath, that if she "had to marry an Englishman it should only be Robert". Dudley himself had declared that the Queen had promised to marry him, "but not this year". The story was going round that she had already married him at the Earl of Pembroke's house. When this gossip reached her ears she was neither surprised nor annoyed. She was playing the same game with Mary—an intrigue of duplicity, of "yea" and "nay", and playing it with a heartless skill, which the passionate impulsiveness of the Scottish Queen's nature would never wholly learn.

There were moments, at least, when Mary's heart ruled her head, and this seldom happened to Elizabeth Tudor. Mary, probably instigated by the Guises, was making at this period warm overtures to Queen Elizabeth, carrying the English Queen's letter next her bosom, treating Sir Thomas Randolph with the most friendly graciousness, calling God to record "that I speak as I think, with all my heart, that I do as much rejoice in that continuance of friendship that I trust shall be between the Queen and me".

She further exerted herself to win Elizabeth by sending her a valuable diamond set in gold accompanied by some elegant verses written by George Buchanan, whose pen was afterwards to serve Elizabeth in another capacity.

Elizabeth's return gift was the famous heart-shaped brilliant or rock crystal, afterwards put to such romantic use. All these sweet flatteries must have been insincere on both sides, since neither of these women had the least cause to like or admire the other.

How the Protestants, deeply concerned in those religious wars in France which the Duc de Guise was endeavouring to persuade Elizabeth were not to suppress the heretic but to punish rebels, viewed these blandishments, may be learned from a letter written by Dr. Jewel in August, 1562 :

"He (the Duc de Guise) has caused his niece, the Queen of Scotland, to court the favour and friendship of our Queen, and send her presents and make her I know not what promises; that she purposed this summer to come upon a visit of honour into England, and to establish a perpetual treaty of friendship, never to be dis-

solved. She has sent her a diamond of great value, a most beautiful gem, set in gold, and accompanied by some beautiful and elegant verses. What next? They seem to suppose that by festive interviews and hunting matches, and flatteries, our attention will easily be diverted from the noise of war and lulled to sleep."

So, in the opinion of some, Mary was merely acting as the decoy of the Guises and alluring Elizabeth to overlook the designs against the French Protestant. These suspicions may have been just. In any case, the English Queen, despite the gifts and compliments, was not wholly won. She began to lean definitely towards the Prince de Condé, who headed the Huguenot party in France.

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This year (1562) saw another severe blow at the remnant of Romanist power in Scotland.

It had been a gloomy time for the Northern Kingdom, if we may credit the continuation of Dr. Jewel's letter, quoted above.

"An incredibly bad season, both as to the weather and the state of the atmosphere. Neither sun nor moon, nor winter nor spring, nor summer nor autumn has performed their appropriate office. It has rained so abundantly and almost without intermission as if the heavens could hardly do anything else. Out of this contagion monstrous births have taken place—infants with hideously deformed bodies, some being quite without heads, some with heads belonging to other creatures, some born without arms, legs, nor shinbones; some were mere skeletons entirely without flesh, just as the image of Death is generally represented. Similar births have been produced in abundance from swine, mares, cows and domestic fowls. The harvest is now coming on, rather scanty indeed, and yet so as we have not much to complain of."

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In this barren year of dreadful omen, the Earl of Huntly, Chief of the Northern Roman Catholics, broke into rebellion, either willingly, or as some think, goaded by Mar, who coveted the title of Moray the family of Huntly had held during the late confusions. It was Huntly, the Scotch Romanist, the mighty Head of the Gordons, who had sent John Lesley to France to warn Mary against her brother and to implore her to allow him to restore her by force, and with her the ancient Faith.

It would have been more courageous and more honest on

Mary's part if she had accepted this advice instead of the insincere compromise which did her, in the end, no good. But the move was too daring to be acceptable to one of her age, sex, and inexperience, and possibly she did not trust Huntly. She seems, in any case, to have fallen entirely under the influence of her half-brother, who, partly on personal and partly on religious grounds, wished to push his feud with Huntly to a bloody conclusion; his policy was, no doubt, to destroy the power of the Roman Catholics in Scotland.

As soon as Mar had come into power as the Queen's chief adviser, Huntly and the Clan of Gordon had sullenly withdrawn northwards. Sir John Gordon of Findlater, Huntly's third son, however, returned to Edinburgh and was with Lord Ogilvy concerned in one of those brawls not uncommon among the nobility. For this offence he was sent to the Tolbooth, but soon after broke prison and returned to his father's lands.

The name of John Gordon is connected with the first of those dubious romances which cloud the name of Mary, but which, on investigation, prove to be evasive.

According to this tale, John Gordon, violent and bold, raised his eyes to the Queen, loved her, and even schemed to be her husband. The fact that he was married was not considered an impediment, even among Roman Catholics divorces were possible if not easy, and the Queen's encouragement of the daring gallant is supposed to have decided her indignant brother to destroy the Clan of Gordon. However this may be, it is clear that Huntly loathed Mar and did not intend to live under his rule, and that Mar intended to pacify the turbulent north by drastic measures.

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In August, 1562, the Queen left Edinburgh with a train of nobles on an expedition to the north. At the end of the month she reached Aberdeen, then no more than a village in size, but the seat of the University founded by her ancestor, James IV.

The Earl and Countess of Huntly waited on Mary in Aberdeen and implored pardon for John Gordon. Mary promised this if the young man would surrender himself, which he did, but hearing that Mar's uncle (his mother's brother, Lord Erskine) was to be his keeper, he contrived to make his escape and again return to the far north. Vexed by this, Mary refused to visit the Cock of the North at Huntly. The great Roman Catholic lord was naturally and deeply vexed by this slight, as he had made elaborate preparations for the Queen's reception.

Probably he still hoped to detach her from Mar and the Protestants, and to enlist her on his side in a Roman Catholic counter movement in Scotland. Probably also the astute Mar suspected this.

Mary proceeded to Rothiemay and Elgin, then lodged at Darnaway Castle, the stronghold of her half-brother, where she held a Privy Council and formally invested James Stewart with the title of Moray, by which he was to be known to history.

This same Council accused John Gordon of contempt and disobedience, both in the original assault on Ogilvy and in twice escaping from justice, and he was ordered to deliver up his houses and fortresses of Findlater and Auchendune. The Queen was not present at this meeting.

The next day she rode to Inverness Castle which was held by two of John Gordon's brothers, who refused to admit the Queen without the order of their chief. Mary had to seek lodgings in the town. When Huntly heard of this he at once ordered his sons to surrender the castle, but too late, as Moray had already attacked it and taken it by storm, executed Alexander Gordon with five of his men (the garrison only consisted of twelve) and set his head on the ramparts. Moray seems at this time to have told the Queen that Huntly intended her to be the wife of John Gordon. This may be so, there may have been some sort of plot on foot on the part of the Huntlys to abduct the Queen and marry her to the son of their chief, but of romantic attachment on the part of John Gordon for Mary there seems but little trace.

No doubt baffled and exasperated by these proceedings Mary rode to the castle of the Bishop of Moray at Spynie, with two thousand Highlanders in her train. She had been refused admission to the Gordon Castle of Findlater. Huntly was not a party to this act, and asked the Queen to command him, offering to capture the two castles immediately. No notice was taken of this and Moray attacked Findlater Castle where John Gordon, with a band of followers, defeated the Queen's troops. This was equivalent to the raising of a standard of rebellion—the Gordons were "put to the horn", that is, proclaimed as traitors, rebels, and outlaws. Moray demanded the surrender of Strathbogie, which was refused; any man who had a feud with any of the Huntlys was set at liberty to attack him, and an order was issued for the exile's arrest. He contrived to escape, and his Countess opened his house to the Royalist soldiers and spies.

This Lady Huntly, then in despair, endeavoured to break through Moray's guard and obtain an audience of the Queen in order to prove her husband's loyalty and to gain Mary's ear, not only, possibly for her husband's pardon, but for the Queen's consent to Huntly's plans for a Romanist restoration.

Mary was a girl of twenty, and in the eyes of the Gordons, as in the eyes of Moray, must have been a mere pawn. Huntly, now at bay, offered to give himself up if he were promised an impartial trial. Moray refused, and the Cock of the North gathered together his followers—no more than five hundred—and resolved to make a stand. The Privy Council, held again at Aberdeen, resolved that as Huntly continues in “his treasonable conspiracies and his coming forward towards Abcrdeen to pursue our Sovereign Lady's person, to resist his wicked enterprise and to pass forward and meet him in the plain field”, and the Queen gave “full powers to her dearest brother, James, Earl of Moray, and others, to press forward to where Huntly and his followers should be on the 27th of October; to display the Queen's banner and to pursue Huntly and his followers . . . to be punished for their treasonable coming in plain battle and for other crimes committed by them before.”

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Mary's part in these proceedings, as it is in so many of the events of her short reign, is obscure. She seems to have been entirely in the hands of Moray and to have felt no sympathy with, and no pity for, the chieftain of her own religion, whose loyalty towards herself she might have trusted, who had offered to free her from the heretics, and whose destruction was being planned on doubtful charges. She enjoyed, or affected to enjoy, the adventure with a certain gay heartlessness, declaring that she liked to ride over the heather amid her troops of armed Highlanders, and that this wild martial life suited her and that fatigue was as nothing compared with the excitement. She certainly spent long hours on horseback and endured the discomforts, the strain of constant travelling and rough habitation with surprising hardihood. It must be remembered that Huntly had been a traitor in 1559.

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In October, Moray, with two thousand men, had cornered Huntly at Corrichie. Huntly's small and valiant force was soon dispersed, and he and his two sons, John and Adam Gordon, were captured. As the Earl of Huntly was being bound and

placed on horsback he fell dead without uttering a syllable—so at least the story goes. It is quite probable he had a dagger thrust in his back. The corpse, shamefully maltreated, was sent to Edinburgh, where his daughter, Lady Forbes, exclaimed on seeing it: "Here lies he who yesterday was esteemed the richest, the wisest and the greatest man in Scotland!"

The Earl of Moray had not done with the Gordons. Sir John Gordon was dragged through the streets of Aberdeen bound like a common criminal. It is said that Mary, still acting under her brother's instigation, was placed at the window of her lodgings to see him pass; if this be true, it would confirm that she had favoured him, and explain Moray's implacable revenge.

Sir John and six other gentlemen of the name of Gordon were executed in Inverness. The Queen was a spectator and upon the executioners' hideous mangling of the victim she fainted. Repulsive as the brutality of this proceeding seemed, it must be remembered there was no capital in Europe where she, as a princess, would have been spared a similar sight. However sensitive she was, however tender her feelings, however acute her susceptibilities, she must, like every other woman of her age, have become early in her life inured and hardened to bloody violence and spectacles of what seem now incredible horror.

It seems, however, allowing for everything, strange that her brother persuaded her to be present at the execution of John Gordon, and that she allowed herself to be persuaded, even though he is supposed to have assured her that letters had been found in Sir John's pocket declaring that, if his father had reached Aberdeen, he intended "burning the Castle with her and all her company in it".

Morton, Moray's creature, was then appointed Lord Chancellor, an office which the Earl of Huntly had nominally held. The Clan of Gordon was ruined, the estates confiscated.

The dead man, brought into court (in the presence of the Queen, says one account) and stood in his upright coffin, was tried for high treason, the charge being read to the corpse and someone answering for him. He was found guilty and the covering of the coffin with the armorial bearings of the Gordons was torn to pieces before all the people. The title descended to Huntly's eldest son; he had nothing whatever to do with the revolt and his father-in-law, Châtelherault, begged the Queen's

clemency, meeting her for this purpose at Dundee on her return journey to Edinburgh.

The new Earl of Huntly was, however, ordered to stand his trial. It was Moray's intention, as the Queen came afterwards to see, to exterminate the House of Gordon. Three months after the fight of Corrichie Lord George Gordon was tried and condemned to be executed. Mary, however, refused to sign his warrant and both he and Adam Gordon were, in time, released.

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The young Earl of Huntly, who inherited nothing but the ruin of his family, was nevertheless by reason of his hereditary position, a dangerous enemy for Moray. He represented the overthrown, but not quenched hopes of the North, and he soon joined forces with another man, equally dangerous, who represented the Border. This was the Lord Bothwell who, during the tumult, had contrived to break prison. This feat seems to have been fairly easily accomplished by the noble captives of that period. Bothwell is credited with breaking his prison bars with his own hands and letting himself down by a rope from the face of the rock on which stands Edinburgh Castle. It is more than probable that he was permitted to escape, more than likely this was by the Queen's connivance. As Knox remarked, "some whispered that he got easy passage by the gate. One thing is certain, to wit, the Queen was little offended at his escaping. Bothwell thus gotten clean away from his enemies took refuge for a while in his Castle at Hermitage in Liddesdale." He was still titular Lieutenant-General of the Border and Admiral, and had troops of ruined, broken "minions of the moon", pirates and adventurers, the Clan of Hepburn, the Hayes, the Ormiston, and many a desperate and unscrupulous adventurer under his command.

Randolph wrote of him with elegant contempt :

" We hear that Earl Bothwell is at liberty and as is said on his faith (parole). I think it the best way to make him a very stark-naked naughty beggar. His substance is consumed for more than twenty days since, saving a Portugal piece, which he received for a token out of the north, from a gentlewoman, that, if ever she be a widow, should never be my wife."

Whatever the means or terms of Bothwell's release he did not deem Scotland safe and fled towards France, which asylum,

however, he did not reach as a storm cast him on to the English coast and into the power of Elizabeth.

In England, strangely enough, the dashing Earl made a good impression, even among the men. His behaviour was courteous and honourable—"keeping his promise, he was very wise and not the man he was reported to be".

Mary asked Elizabeth to allow him to continue his journey to France, which request the Queen of England granted. In Paris, surely again through Mary's influence with the Guises, he was given the post of Captain of the Scottish Guard.

With "this rash, glorious and hazardous young man" out of the way, Moray satisfied with his earldom and the leadership of the country, Maitland working to all appearances with sincere loyalty for his Queen's interests, the Catholic North crushed, the House of Hamilton silenced by the insanity of Arran, the Lennox faction quiet with the Earl and his two sons in England, affairs were almost peaceful in Scotland.

If Mary had liked John Gordon, or been shocked by his horrible death, she soon recovered her spirits; perhaps she was becoming inured to bloodshed, cruelty and violence. Tedious suggestions for her marriage continued to be made; the Duke of Norfolk, or Lord Darnley, the eldest son of Lennox were tentatively suggested. With courtly insincerity the Queen told Randolph "that her late husband was so fresh in her mind that she could not think of another marriage".

She was very gay at this time and seemed possessed by an access of high spirits. Even M. de Foix, the French Ambassador, noted—"She devotes every morning to the chase, and every evening to balls and masquerades, which greatly offends the Puritans."

Where was the exquisite tact and judgment with which Mary was credited? She could stand by and see the Romanist Gordons wiped out to please Moray and his Protestants, but she could not forgo behaviour that bitterly offended those whom she was endeavouring to conciliate. She appeared in the masques dressed as a cavalier, a sore cause of offence, and her feasts of "joy, mirth, marvellous sights and great show, and singular devices, nothing left undone that might either fill the bellies, feed the eyes, or content the mind" were thought to pass all dignity and decorum.

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Into the gaiety of Mary, the intrigues of Moray and Lething-

ton, the interference of Elizabeth, breaks the ugly little episode (February, 1563) of Mary's second amorous adventure—if indeed John Gordon was, or did aspire to be, her favoured gallant.

While Lethington was endeavouring to get foreign backing from Spain by offering the Queen's hand to Don Carlos, a Prince who had fallen into almost as hopeless a state of insanity as the Earl of Arran, and while Elizabeth was putting forward Robert Dudley as a possible candidate for the Crown Matrimonial of Scotland, Mary was, perforce, amusing herself with her French lutanists, singers, dancers, and poets. Among them was Pierre de Boscotel de Chastelard (or Châtelard or Châtellard), who had been in Mary's train when she first arrived in Scotland, had returned to France, and come again to Holyrood where Mary had received him into what seemed to the jealous eyes of the Puritans, considerable and unwarranted favour, which may, however, have been no more than the gracious regard of a mistress for a pleasing young page.

The story of Chastelard has been eagerly seized upon by the romanticists, and indeed, as related by Brantôme and as touched upon by John Knox, does appear to be of the essence of romantic and poetic tragedy.

Chastelard was a Frenchman of good birth; he had distinguished himself as a soldier and also as a poet, he was a pupil of Ronsard. He was a descendant of Bayard, and Brantôme, who knew him personally but who wrote long after his unhappy death, declares that he was tall, comely, and possessed of an elegant mind and many attractive accomplishments. He had been in the suite of the Sieur de Danville, but had left this service when the Wars of Religion commenced in France, for he was a Huguenot and his master a Romanist. He had, despite this, returned to the train of a Catholic Queen, and Mary had taken him into her favour, and exchanged, it is said, verses with him—at least it is certain that he wrote verses to her, courtly epistles, no doubt on the lines of those composed by his master, Ronsard—and was her constant companion in her sports and games. Mary leant on his breast in the French dances, which were performed in the evenings in the galleries of Holyrood when the tiresome business of the day was over, fondled his curls with her long fingers, laughed and jested with him, and, in brief, admitted him into a dangerous familiarity. They were about the same age, they spoke the same language, and they

had the same tastes. On the question of marriage Mary was prepared to sacrifice herself for what was vaguely known as "her country's good". She conceded much to ambition, she allowed Moray and Maitland—who at this time seemed to be sincerely attached to her service—to dictate to her her policy. At home, a lunatic, Arran, had been proposed for her hand, abroad an imbecile in the person of Don Carlos had been offered to her. A third suitor was a commoner—Robert Dudley with whom Queen Elizabeth had caused a scandal. The only eligible suitor she had had, the Archduke Charles, had been forbidden her by the jealousy of foreign powers. The question of her marriage therefore hung in the balance and was tediously delayed from month to month.

Why should she not, then, during that barren year of monstrous births and constant rain and miserable harvest, of rebellion, blood, and execution, at least amuse herself, turning from those self-interested men too often grim, rude, and regardless of any courtesies towards her, to an elegant and amorous youth, whose person and whose manners reminded her of the country she had always regretted?

However she may have encouraged Chastelard, however he may have mistaken her sincerity, a desperate imprudence on his part brought the elegant coquetry to a violent end. On that winter day when Moray and Lethington had been consulting with the Queen in her private cabinet before the departure of Lethington for England, Chastelard had contrived to conceal himself in the Queen's chamber, where he was found asleep beneath the bed by two Grooms of the Chamber who informed the Queen's ladies.

The matter was kept secret from Mary for fear of disturbing her night's rest, but in the morning when she heard of it, she ordered the daring youth to be banished from her presence.

The Court moved a few days after to Bruntislaw, and Chastelard, either wishing to justify himself for his former act or driven to despair by the coldness of the Queen or encouraged by some glance or word from her, repeated his offence.

The Queen, on entering her bedchamber at night saw the young Frenchman before her. Deeply offended, she called on Moray, who was in her antechamber, and when her brother hastened to her side, she bade him thrust his dagger through the intruder.

Moray refused, reminding the Queen of the scandal that

would ensue on such a deed. Chastelard was arrested, tried for his offence, and beheaded within sight of the palace of Holyrood.

He refused, Brantôme says, and this was a very remarkable thing to do at that period, all religious consolations on the scaffold, preferring to keep in his hand a copy of Ronsard's "Hymn to Death". At the last moment when he was about to kneel on the block, he is said to have turned to the room of the palace where he thought the Queen was seated, and said : " Farewell, most cruel and most beautiful of princesses."

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That is the tale which has become part of Mary Queen of Scots' legend. It represents Chastelard as a love-crazed romantic, with his head in the air, who was either so favoured by the Queen that he dared to trade on her kindness in concealing himself in her bedroom, or was so unbalanced by a passion for one above him, that he completely lost his prudence. Reading the case in this light the Queen appears heartless, a sophisticated and brilliant woman who, for her own amusement, encourages a simple youth and then, on the first liberty, coldly condemns him to a cruel death.

The penalty seemed, indeed, far too high for the crime, and one can scarcely understand Mary, gay, reckless as she usually appears to have been, indifferent to appearances as she nearly always was, calling for her brother to stab the young poet at her feet.

An entirely different version of this oft-repeated tale is to be found in Bishop Quadra's dispatches. He declares that he received it first-hand from Maitland, and though it is as sordid as the other version is romantic, it seems more likely that this is the truth than the account given by Brantôme, the romantic gossip, so many years later. This aspect of the story at least puts Mary in a better light, explains her anger, and justifies the severe sentence on Chastelard. If she had encouraged him, laughed with him, listened to his verses, danced with him, been, perhaps, too kind to him, her anger at his odious treachery would be redoubled.

This is Quadra's story :

" Lethington, Lord James (Moray) and two other members of her Council were with her for several hours in her private Cabinet until after midnight. During this time a little Frenchman called Chaste-

lard, who arrived some months ago from France and who was always joking amongst the ladies, took the opportunity of some of the attendants in the Queen's chamber having gone to sleep, in slipping beneath the bed.

"When Lethington and the others had gone, two Grooms of the Chamber entered, and when the chamber was clear, looked, as usual, behind the tapestry and the bed and came across the hidden Frenchman. Finding himself discovered he tried hard to pass it all off as a joke and said he had fallen asleep there because they would not let him sleep anywhere else. He wanted them to let him go with this, but the Grooms called the Mistress of the Robes and told her, and she ordered the Captain of the Guard to be summoned and charged him to keep the man in safe custody, saying, however, nothing to the Queen so as not to spoil her night's rest.

"She was informed the next morning and the man was brought before a council and examined. He wished still to turn the thing into a joke, but the Queen ordered that he should be punished in any case, if not for his villainy then for his carelessness and that the truth of the matter should be discovered as it could not be negligence.

"Finding himself in a fix, the man said that he had been sent from France by persons of distinguished position with sufficient means and apparel in order that he should get a footing in the Court and household of the Queen of Scotland and try to make himself so familiar with her and her ladies that he could seize an opportunity of obtaining some appearance of imprudence, sufficient to sully the honour of the Queen. He was instructed, after attempting so great a crime as this to escape at once, and he should be greatly esteemed and largely rewarded. And he therefore intended to remain that night underneath the bed and go out in the morning, so that he could escape after being seen, which was what he desired.

"After this confession had been made and confirmed before all the people they cut off the man's head.

"The persons who sent him on this treacherous errand were, according to Lethington, several, that she who gave the principal instructions was Madame de Curosoc, the wife of the Admiral Coligny. The Queen writes to Lethington that the other names are such that they cannot be entrusted to letters and I do not know who it is that he suspects, as he keeps it very close from me. This malefactor came here last November with a German, nominally as his servant, and both were followers of M. Danville. When he passed through here he told a friend of his, by means of whom I will try to find out something, that he was going to Scotland to see his lady love. This Queen had received news of the affair before Lethington's arrival here, by means of a special messenger who travelled with great speed, and Lethington found it was very much

talked about, which greatly grieved him, until he received advice of what was being done.

"He seems now somewhat tranquillized about the affair itself, but complains bitterly of the people who sent the man on his errand. He says that all Scotland is offended at it, that it originated in some of the most powerful people in France."

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Thus Bishop Quadra, and there is no reason to doubt that he wrote sincerely and accurately what Lethington had told him of the affair. The question arises: Did the adroit and subtle Lethington, bitterly offended that the affair was being "very much talked about", invent this version to save the Queen's reputation in the eyes of the Spanish Ambassador and the English Court? It is not, anyhow, clear exactly who bribed Chastelard, presuming that he was bribed. The Huguenot party in France seems intended; in any case this expedient of ruining the Queen of Scotland appears as clumsy as atrocious. Whether, however, Chastelard was sincerely enamoured of the Queen, or whether he was the miserable tool of her enemies, the episode did her definite harm in the eyes of the Puritans.

"Chastelard died," hinted John Knox, maliciously, "that the secret of the Queen might not be betrayed."

This was probably the opinion of the common people of Scotland. For the second time the Queen's name had been smirched by the whisper of an ignoble love affair.

Moray, shrewd and stately, at this period seemingly staunchly in his sister's interests, was greatly troubled by the incident.

Of Mary's mind we know nothing save what we may gather from the fact that she sacrificed the man without, apparently, any regret.

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A few weeks after the tragedy of the Frenchman, poet or spy, romantic or scoundrel, the young Queen braved the curiosity of her people and opened her first Parliament in state. She rode from Holyrood to the Parliament House in robes of state, the Duke of Châtelherault, first prince of the Blood, carried the Crown. Argyll, who had married Moray's sister, bore the Sceptre, and Moray himself the Sword.

This was a splendid spectacle for the people and Mary bore herself with winning grace and dignity. She opened the Parliament with a speech prettily delivered in Scotch with a French

accent, sneered at by her detractors as a "painted oration". Randolph thus describes the ceremony :

"The 26th of May Her Grace rode to the Parliament House in this order—Gentlemen, Barons, Lords, and Earls, after them the trumpeters and music, heralds. Then the Earl of Moray, who carried the Sword, Argyll the Sceptre, and the Duke the Crown Royal. Then followed the Queen in her parliament robes with the rich crown upon her head, Nobles' wives in order of rank, twelve in number, the Four Maries, Demoiselles d'honneur, a fairer sight than that was never seen.

"There followed as many more so wonderful in beauty that I know not what Court they can be compared with. The beauty, I assure your lordship, this day was there of the whole realm.

"Having received her place in Parliament and silence being commanded she delivered with singular good grace an oration, short and very pretty whereof I send your lordship a copy as I am sure she made it herself and deserves great praise in uttering the same."

The Parliament House cannot have had very acceptable associations for Mary, it was situate in the old Tolbooth which had been a portion of the Cathedral of St. Giles, once the rich shrine of the patron saint of Edinburgh, but, when Mary made her courtly concessions here, desecrated by the Reformers into secular uses or reserved for their own form of worship.
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If Mary was ever flattered by the hopes of a successful reign it must have been at this period. Yet the question of her marriage was a constant torment. During the sitting of this parliament, Knox, who, whatever his faults, had that tremendous force which may be named greatness, broke out into one of his thundering sermons, calling upon all the Protestants to see that the Queen, who must be married soon, did not choose a Papist for her lord.

Mary, perhaps still beguiled by the thought of seducing the grim Reformer into a friend and servant, summoned him into her presence and once again Knox, who had had several interviews with the Queen, stared at the "pleasing face of a gentlewoman". Mary, whatever her inward feelings, seems seldom at this period to have indulged those tempers and used that strong language so characteristic of Elizabeth, but on this occasion she did reproach Knox with his freedom of speech and the grim Reformer replied : When it pleased God to deliver her from the bondage

of darkness and errors wherein she had been nourished, she would not find the liberty of his tongue offensive. In the pulpit he was not his own master but the servant of Him who commanded that “ye shall flatter no flesh on the face of the earth”.

Mary said that she—“ did not wish his flattery but desired to know what position he had in the kingdom which entitled him to interfere with her marriage? ”

Knox replied, with rude fearlessness—“ that as her nobility did not know their duties it was for him as a plain citizen to teach them.”

The Queen, still without loss of temper but evidently realizing the hopelessness of bandying words with this implacable personality, ordered him from her presence.
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As soon as Parliament rose the Queen, either out of policy or indulging restlessness, went to Inverary where she stayed with the Countess of Argyll, with whom she seems to have gone as far in friendship as she went with any woman at this time, for several weeks. She then went to Glasgow and to St. Mary's Isle in Kirkcudbright, afterwards to Drummond Castle and Glenfinlas; these long journeys were all on horseback and Mary was accompanied by a cumbersome if resplendent train of ladies and officers of state.

When she was thus absent from the capital the fury of Puritan feeling could no longer be quelled; while the Roman Catholics in her household were at their devotions in the Chapel in Holyrood the Protestants broke in, drove the priests from the altar, and scattered the congregation; Knox is supposed, and no doubt correctly, to have been behind this riot. He, at least, warmly supported these lawless Protestants, for which offence he was summoned to answer before Mary and a convention of nobles when she returned to Edinburgh to celebrate her twenty-first birthday.

The charge against Knox was that “he had endeavoured to intimidate, by summoning all the Protestants to Edinburgh, the judges who were going to try the ringleaders of the riots in Holyrood”.

This trial was held before a large gathering—the Queen at the head of the Council table, Knox, uncovered, at the foot.

“Who gave him authority to make convention of my lieges? Is not this treason?” demanded the Queen of Maitland, who conducted the prosecution.

Then Patrick, Lord Ruthven, always hostile to Mary, put in :
 "No, madam, for he makes convocation of people to hear
 prayers and sermons almost daily, and whatever Your Grace or
 others will think thereof, *we* think it no treason."

Stung almost beyond control by these bold words, the Queen
 retorted :

"Hold your peace and let him answer for himself."

Without regard for Mary's rank or sex Knox remarked
 rudely :

"The Queen has interrupted, while I had begun to reason
 with the Secretary (Maitland) whom I had taken to be a better
 dialectician than Her Grace."

The Queen, holding her own, retorted :

"I will say nothing against your religion nor against your
 convening your sermons, but what authority had you to convene
 my subjects without my order?"

Knox retorted sternly that he had the authority of the
 Kirk for what he had done, and therefore could not be in the
 wrong.

This reply must have been hard for Mary to endure, but
 she seems to have kept her temper admirably. Changing her
 ground, she turned to the assembled peers and asked if it were
 not treason to accuse a prince of cruelty?

"I think there be Acts of Parliament against such whisperers."

The reference was to one of Knox's letters, in which he had
 mentioned the "cruelty" of the Papists against the Protestants.
 Without allowing the Lords to reply Knox cut in :

"Is it lawful for me, madam, to answer for myself, or shall
 I be condemned before I be heard?"

The young Queen replied :

"Say what you can, for I think you have enough to do."

Knox then argued that he had not alluded personally to Mary
 in this letter nor to her "cruelty" but to that of the Papists.

In the conclusion of the trial the Queen, either out of
 clemency, disdain, or overborne by the general feeling of the
 assembly, pardoned Knox. She forbore also, with commendable
 dignity, from making any reply to his parting shot :

"Madam, I pray God to purge your heart from Papistry and
 to preserve you from a council of flatterers."

* * * * *

A sordid and painful episode occurred soon after the trial
 of Knox. It was one which gave great handle to the tales of

wantonness, corruption, and crime continually brought by the Protestants against the Papists and the French.

One of Mary's apothecaries had a secret liaison with one of the servants, a Frenchwoman. Between them they killed the child who was the result of the intrigue, were discovered, tried, and publicly executed, to the great sorrow and humiliation of the Queen.

The hanging of this young woman is the sordid episode on which is founded the beautiful ballad of "Mary Hamilton", a poetic tampering with facts which makes the heroine of the grim little tragedy one of the Queen's "Four Maries", who were, however, all highly placed women to whose name no shade of scandal ever attached. The ballad is also wrong in point of time—the hanging of the poor servant took place in 1563, and the ballad refers to a king, so that it has been supposed to glance at some episode in the life of Darnley; so often is legend better known and more relied on than fact.

This ugly affair must have hurt and stung Mary considerably, nor could it have been lightened for her by the fact that the same week as her servants were hanged for infanticide, a Protestant, who had committed the same offence, was merely ordered to stand in a white sheet in St. Giles' Church during Divine service.

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Elizabeth, whose policies Mary always watched with such a personal and passionate interest, was slowly moving round to a definite interference in French affairs, by offering help to the Prince of Condé, head of the Huguenots, and a definite interference in Scottish affairs by meddling once more in the question of Mary's marriage.

In the autumn of 1562, Elizabeth had been unwell, with what Quadra termed "smallpox" and the cold caught by leaving her bath for the air, which resulted in a violent fever. She was extremely ill, and thought to be about to die, and the question of the Succession reached an acute point. The claims of the unhappy Lady Catherine Grey, then a prisoner in the Tower, because of her marriage, were put forward, while some were for setting up the Earl of Huntingdon, but the Queen recovered before these arguments could reach any conclusion.

It is noteworthy that at this time, when Elizabeth thought she was in extreme danger, she protested that although "she loved and always had loved Lord Robert dearly, as God was her

witness, nothing improper had ever passed between them." That she should have made, more or less publicly, such a declaration, is a curious indication of the morals and good taste of the period.

Elizabeth rose from her illness more angry than ever against the Guises. Her particular grievances against them seems to have been their share in the loss of Calais. She viewed with rage and misgiving the persecution of the Huguenots in France and affected a shocked horror towards the atrocities of the Roman Catholics which it is difficult to believe she felt, since she was in herself capable of cruelty, as witness her treatment, later in her reign, of Robert Southwell, S.J., and other priests, and her behaviour towards Lady Catherine Grey, though she may have been merciful according to the standards of the age.

In a stilted letter to Mary she had written, however : "What drop of rhubarb can purge the bile which these tyrannies engenders? In these broils my own subjects have lost their good ships and lives and received a new name, formerly unknown to me—Huguenots."

As if there were not already enough complicated intrigues abroad Elizabeth revived another. This was the marriage of Robert Dudley to Mary. Whether she suggested this with the idea of merely vexing the Queen of Scotland or with that of making her favourite a King and a spy for herself in the household of Mary or whether it was merely an artifice to delay the negotiations for any other possible marriage for Mary, will never be known, but certain it is that she put the proposal before Sir William Maitland of Lethington, who was then (1563) representing Mary in London, and whatever his previous record, serving her interests faithfully.

"The Queen said," wrote De Quadra to Philip, "that if his (Maitland's) mistress would take her advice and wished to marry safely and happily, she would give her a husband who would ensure both, and this was Lord Robert, in whom Nature has implanted so many graces that if *she* wished to marry she would prefer him to all the princes in the world, and many more things of the same sort."

To this startling proposition Maitland, no doubt with concealed irony, replied that "it was a great proof of the love she bore to his Queen, as she was willing to give her a thing so dearly prized by herself, and he thought that the Queen his mistress, even if she loved Lord Robert as dearly as she, Elizabeth,

did, she would not marry him and so deprive her of all the joy and solace she received from his companionship."

Elizabeth retorted by saying she "wished that Dudley's brother, Ambrose (whom she had just made Earl of Warwick, one of his father's titles), had the grace and good looks of Lord Robert, in which case each could have one."

Maitland, deeply offended at such levity and at such a nonentity as Warwick being proposed for the Scotch Queen, could hardly reply for confusion. Elizabeth, obviously with malice, continued, "that the Earl of Warwick was not ugly, either, and was not ungraceful, though his manner was rather rough and he was not so gentle as Lord Robert. For the rest, however, he was so brave, so liberal, so magnanimous, that truly he was worthy of being the husband of any great princess."

Maitland's retort to this, which to him must have been offensive nonsense, was that the irresistible Dudley should marry both of the Queens, one after the other, beginning with Elizabeth as she was elder, and that when it should please God to call her to Himself, she could leave the Queen of Scots both the heiress to her kingdom and her husband. "Surely," Maitland added, "Lord Robert would have children by one of the Queens, and they would in time become kings of both the countries, thus settling all question of the Succession."

"This joke", as De Quadra terms it, which Elizabeth cannot have found much to her taste, ended the conversation, leaving Lethington extremely upset by the talk of the Earl of Warwick as a possible husband for Mary, but whether Elizabeth was serious or no in her suggestion with regard to Dudley, she continued to press this proposal.

Maitland, doing his utmost for his Queen and his political ideal, the union of the two kingdoms, endeavoured, with all the force of his insinuating manners and fascinating address, to press Elizabeth to a final decision as to the Succession. Elizabeth insisted that to name her successor would simply be "to prepare her own winding sheet and to make her grave ready"; and she feared that to select her heir would be not only to cause her own death but civil war.

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Elizabeth returned much the same answer to her Lords and Commons when they begged her to settle the exasperating question of her own marriage and heir. She told them brusquely that "the marks they saw on her face were not wrinkles but

pits of smallpox, that although she might be old, God could send her children as He did to St. Elizabeth", and that they had better consider well what they were asking as if she declared her successor it would cost much blood to England.

The civil war in France had not gone to Elizabeth's liking. The Huguenots had been defeated and a peace had been patched up between the Prince of Condé and the French Government. The Earl of Warwick, the offer of whose hand to Mary had been regarded as such an insult by Lethington, had distinguished himself in this war by his defence of Havre against hopeless odds. The fleet under Lord Edward Clinton sent to relieve him arrived too late, and this military set-back further soured Elizabeth's temper. She issued a warning that Mary was not to choose a husband without her consent. Her main object in helping Condé, the restoration of Calais to the English Crown, had not been achieved.

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Mary's policies and her affections suffered a strong blow in the death of her powerful kinsman and adviser, the famous Duc de Guise, who had been assassinated at the Siege of Orleans (1563).

This event caused Maitland to lose hope of much backing for Mary's English claims in France, and he once more turned his attention to Spain and revived the project of a match between Mary and the heir of Philip, Don Carlos, or, at least, affected to do, for it is impossible to trust the sincerity of any of these negotiations.

There were, meanwhile, galling complications of the English succession question in the claims of Henry Hastings, third Earl of Huntingdon, who was descended from the Dukes of Buckingham and York, and those of Lord Hertford, as husband of Lady Catherine Grey. Neither of these wished to compete for the perilous honour. Huntingdon wrote to Leicester, vehemently denying any wish to put in as a possible successor to Elizabeth, and Lady Catherine and her husband, both in the Tower "in a miserable and comfortless state", only asked for liberty.

Hertford had been crippled by a huge fine (fifteen thousand pounds) and his poor wife, who had borne two children in prison, was dying of a broken heart.

Still, these unwilling pretenders were put forward now and then, by different parties, and this added to the tediousness of the continuous problem of the succession.

Maitland tired of the long-dragged-out negotiations, "the gentle letters, good words, and pleasant messages, which are good means to begin friendship among princes, but that I take to be slender bands to hold it fast long". He protested to Cecil, declaring that "frank dealing would sooner a great deal grow to a conclusion".

Dudley himself was not keen on the Scotch marriage. Though he was but of mediocre intellect he was shrewd enough to value the bird in the hand. He had not given up all hopes of marrying Elizabeth, and, ambitious as he was, he was not eager for the difficult task of supporting the Crown Matrimonial of Scotland against the hostility of the Scotch nobility; he had been promised more certain honours—the Earldom of Leicester and the Masterpiece of the Horse.

There was thus a cloud over the false friendship between the two Queens which Mary, ever anxious to conciliate Elizabeth, sent Sir James Melville, in October 1563, who had once been her page and who had lately returned from the Palatine, to remove by a personal interview with the difficult Englishwoman.

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Melville was smooth, suave, and insinuating; he had been instructed by Mary to put Dudley in his place, and when that nobleman eagerly asked the envoy what the Queen of Scots thought of him and of the proposed marriage, "I", writes Melville, "answered very coldly, as I had been by my Queen commanded. Then he began to purge himself of so proud a pretence as to marry so great a Queen, declaring he did not esteem himself worthy to wipe her shoes and that the invitation of that proposition of marriage proceeded from Mr. Cecil, his secret enemy. 'For if I', said he, 'should have appeared desirous of that marriage, I should have offended both the Queens and lost their favour.'"

Elizabeth began to play her usual game with Melville. She said that she was determined to end her life in virginity, but had she chosen a husband she certainly would have selected Lord Robert, the new Earl of Leicester.

Melville saw the installation of the favourite in this dignity, which was done at Westminster with great solemnity, the Queen herself helping to put on his ceremonial mantle, he sinking upon his knee before her with a great gravity.

"She could not refrain from putting her hand on his neck, smilingly tickling him, with the French Ambassador and I

standing by. Then she turned, asking me 'How I liked him?' I answered that he was a worthy servant and that he was happy who had a princess who could discern and reward good service. 'Yet', said she, 'you liked better of yonder long lad,' pointing towards my lord Darnley, who as nearest prince of the blood was bearer of the Sword of Honour that day before her."

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For Melville's benefit Elizabeth staged a pretty little scene with which she intended Mary to be regaled and deceived.

"She took me to her bedchamber and opened a little cabinet wherein were divers little pictures wrapped within papers, and their names written with her own hand upon the papers. Upon the first she took up was written 'My Lord's Picture'. I held the candle and pressed to see the picture so named; she appeared loath to let me see it, yet my opportunity prevailed for a sight thereof, and I found it the Earl of Leicester's picture and desired that I might have it to carry home to my Queen, which she refused, alleging that she had but that one picture of his. I said: 'Your Majesty has here the original,' for I perceived him at the furthest part of the chamber with the secretary, Cecil.

"Then she took out the Queen's picture and kissed it and I ventured to kiss her hand, for the great love therein shown to my mistress. She showed me also a fair ruby, as great as a tennis ball; I desired that she would send either it or my Lord of Leicester's picture as a token to the Queen."

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Mary had instructed Melville to play up to Elizabeth's fooling lest she should be wearied, she being well-informed of the Queen's natural temper. Melville, therefore, spent a good deal of time in courtly badinage with Elizabeth, whom he seems to have contrived to put in a considerable good-humour.

For his benefit the Queen put on a succession of dresses in the English, the French, and the Italian style and demanded of the courtly Scotsman which suited her best.

Melville found that the Italian dress was the most becoming. It showed off, he said, her golden hair—a comment that delighted her. But he mentioned in his "Memoirs" that the hair was "rather reddish-yellow".

The Queen then began probing Melville as to the merits of Mary; she wanted to know which of them was fairest, which was of the highest stature, what were Mary's recreations. Melville hedged in skilful fashion; he flattered Elizabeth to the top of

her bent, but he would not admit any defect in his own Queen, who was, as he declared, in a famous phrase, "very lovesome".

Elizabeth showed off her singing, her playing, and her dancing before the Ambassador, and Melville managed to please her with his adroit compliments. He even gave her the palm over Mary in the dance, saying his Queen did not dance "so highly or disposededly" as she did.

This was all very well, but Elizabeth could not be brought to book on the main object of Melville's mission.

"She was not so old," she declared, "that they need continually keep her death before her eyes by talking about the succession."

She continued, obstinately and perversely, to offer Leicester to Mary, and to make vague promises as to the succession if he should be accepted. The adroit envoy had heard whispered, however, some rumours that could not fail to be good news to Mary—namely that Elizabeth knew herself incapable of bearing children, and would not subject herself to any man.

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That summer and autumn of 1563 the plague, brought by the overcrowded insanitary troopships from Havre, spread over England. The congested area of London was a hotbed for the infection and Camden gives the extraordinary figure of twenty-one thousand five hundred and fifty corpses being carted out for burial from the city. While this plague was carrying off five or six hundred a week, the Queen withdrew to Windsor from whence she sent her instructions to Thomas Randolph in Edinburgh to sound Mary's mind on the endless question of her marriage and to persuade her to put all her expectations in that direction in the hands of the Queen of England.

Mary, as might have been expected, had not shown herself favourable to the Leicester suggestion.

"Is it confirmable," she asked, "to her promise to use me as a sister or daughter, to marry me to a subject? What if the Queen, my sister, should herself marry and have children, what then have I got?"

She was, however, something tempted by the possible bribe of Elizabeth's promise of recognition of her as heiress of England. The young Queen, perhaps with a heavy heart, perhaps with genuine gaiety, contrived to throw off these vexations and to give a brilliant "Feast of the Bean" on Twelfth Night, 1564. The Bean, which was hidden in a cake, gave to its possessor the right

of being King or Queen for the night. Mary Fleming, afterwards Maitland's wife, won the honour on this occasion, and Mary amused herself by dressing the girl up in her own most resplendent robes and gorgeous jewels—perhaps some of the priceless Crown Jewels of France which she had brought with her from Paris; many of these she returned to the envoy of Charles IX, but she had, by right, some of the most famous gems in Europe.

This is almost the last picture of Mary Stewart before misfortunes, that were never to lift, darkened over her fragile brilliance.

Mr. Thomas Randolph, Elizabeth's Ambassador, opened this ball with another of the Maries—Mary Beaton. He was supposed to be in love with this lady, whom he did not, however, marry but who became the wife of Ogilvy of Boyne.

Mary's life at this period seems to have been as gay and as cheerful as it ever had been or would be. She passed some of her hours in the handsome libraries she had at Holyrood. She amused herself with the butts in the gardens at Holyrood, Falkland and Linlithgow; she tilted at the ring on the sands of Leith, where great crowds watched her dexterity; she played at chess with her ladies, she spent long hours over her intricate and elaborate embroidery, which was seldom out of her hands, even when she presided at the Council Chambers, she superintended the making and cutting of her dresses, in which she took a keen interest. While she watched the slow unfolding of the steady policies of Moray and Maitland, the two men to whom she had pledged herself, or listened to their negotiations as to her future marriage, in her heart she must have pondered with a daily increasing poignancy and anxiety as to whom this husband would be, and whom her lover might be.

Moray, who appears at this time to have felt very secure in his position, ventured to suggest to his sister that she should change her religion. The Privy Council asked her not to practise the Romish rites in Holyrood.

The Queen, who had given up so much, too much, in fact, resisted here. It is even said that she offered to allow Moray to take the whole burden of the government on himself, rather than to exact from her this last possible confession. There was some strained feeling between the two and Moray retired in Fife.

It can hardly be doubted that, since Mary's arrival in Scotland Moray had been loyal to her and put his considerable abilities and great influence at her disposal. He and Maitland worked in her interests and in those of Scotland as far as these could be discerned in the welter of criss-cross intrigues, claims, prospects and chances that composed the Scotch politics of the day.

But brother and sister were bitterly divided on the question of religion and Mary suspected Moray of too soaring an ambition, while he judged her too light, and, in his heart "an idolatress". Still, he managed, with Maitland's help, her affairs for her as well as they could be managed, and she was content that he should take this burden, though she may have irked at the authority it gave him.

Moray's term of power was, however, coming to an end, for the woman through whom he held it suddenly displayed tempestuous passions and violent wilful desires that set her beyond his or any man's control.

Moray had soon disposed of John Gordon and any possible weakness of his sister in that direction and he had glossed over the Chastelard scandal, but he was to be faced with another of Mary's love affairs in which her mind and her temper was clearly seen, and in which her intention was not to be thwarted.

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A marriage between the Queen of Scots and Henry Stewart, the heir of the royal Lennox Stewarts, had been suggested soon after her return from France, and she had emphatically declared that "never would she wed with that faction". Lennox had, in fact, disgusted by the preference shown to the Hamiltons, been a rebel towards Mary and her mother. He had played fast and loose ever since and with his wife had been released a year before this date from the Tower by Elizabeth, where he had been sent on some trifling excuse, and retired to his estates in Yorkshire where he kept a little Roman Catholic Court. The scheme was now mooted that he might be restored to his considerable possessions in Scotland, the forfeiture of which was to be reversed by Mary. It was twenty years since he had been in his native country and the actual motives that induced Mary to recall him and Elizabeth to allow him to go are not clear.

Lord Lennox was a royal Scot, descended from Mary, daughter to James II, who married James Hamilton, Earl of

Arran. Lennox considered that he had a better claim than the Duke of Châtelherault to be first Prince of the Blood, because the Duke had been born while his father's first wife had been living, though divorced. The power of the Hamiltons had, however, been sufficient to secure the downfall of Lennox and the effacement of his claim. It was now considered politic, both by Elizabeth and Mary, to revive these claims and to confuse further the baffling question of the succession by bringing Lennox on the scene. His wife, Margaret, had a better claim than his own to the throne as she was the daughter of Margaret Tudor, sister of Henry VIII, by her second marriage with Archibald, Earl of Angus; she had, however, on some legal quibble about her parents' divorce, been declared illegitimate by the Scotch Parliament. It was probably the fact that the eldest of the Lennox's two sons had reached a marriageable age that caused this sudden interest to be taken in him and his fortunes.

Henry, Lord Darnley, was, in point of view of birth, a suitable husband for either of the Queens since his claim would be united to that of whichever of them he married.

Elizabeth gave Lennox and his wife permission to return to Scotland where the Earl's restitution to his estates was proclaimed at the Market Cross in Edinburgh in the autumn of 1564, and Henry Stewart, Lord Darnley, the "long lad" Melville had seen bearing the Sword before Elizabeth, followed soon afterwards and was presented to his Queen at Wemyss Castle. He was soon her chosen companion in all her sports, games and pleasures. At about the same time she took into favour, how or why we do not know, David Rizzio, a Piedmontese of low birth, who had come to Edinburgh in the train of the Duke of Savoy's Ambassador, and together with his brother Giuseppe had found employment in Holyrood, where David sang bass in the Chapel choir.

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The winter was of a startling severity, the Thames was completely frozen over "and people walk upon it" wrote the Spanish Ambassador, "as they do on the streets". In Scotland the cold was even more intense.

Elizabeth was ill, troubled with catarrh, and had become gaunt and thin. She patched up a peace—that of Troyes—with France; she still retained Leicester in favour. Mary now, either sincerely or falsely, seemed to be hesitating as to whether she should after all accept Leicester if the English succession could

be assured. Elizabeth had come to the point when she made the crazy suggestion that if Mary would marry Leicester and come to live with her, she would be glad to bear the charges of both households. The favourite, however, had a growing dislike even to present himself at the Scottish Court, much less offer himself as a serious candidate for the Queen's hand. It is even said that he went the length of, through Randolph the English envoy at Edinburgh, assuring the Scotch Queen that Elizabeth's object in offering her his hand "was only to deceive her and put off other suitors".

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In the January of 1565 Mary wrote a very interesting letter to Archbishop Beaton, her Ambassador in Paris, which shows not only that she was desperately anxious to bring Elizabeth to a head in the matrimonial entanglement, but also the diplomatic duplicity which came to her as a matter of course :

"January, 1565.

"MONSIEUR DE GLASGOW,

"I sent the bearer more for a blind than for any matter of importance—expressly to set people guessing what it can be about. Pretend to be greatly annoyed by the delay of this letter and, if possible, cause the English Ambassador to suppose that it relates to something of great consequence. Lose no time in going to the Queen (Catherine de' Medici) and soliciting an audience; and, under the cloak of my pension about which you will talk to her, invent some subjects which will occupy her attention for a considerable time, purposely to make them imagine that this dispatch contains something very important; . . . will give you intelligence concerning my affairs; you will know to what account this information may be turned; and next day, speak to her again if you can, and write to M. le Cardinal (of Lorraine) as if in great haste; but take no notice of anything beyond forwarding my letters, so that he may receive news of me, and send me as soon as you possibly can, one of your people with all the news you are able to obtain.

"I pray God to have you in His holy keeping,

Your very good mistress and friend,

MARY R."

This is sufficient to show that Mary, if she had not learned much real statecraft, was an adept in the petty details of diplomacy.

Mr. Thomas Randolph gives a pretty picture of Mary living the simple life of a citizen's wife at St. Andrews, where she

lodged in a merchant's house, her train very few and with "small repair (company) from any part".

"I see," she said to the English Ambassador, "well that you are weary of this company and this treatment. I sent for you to be merry and to see how like a bourgeois wife I live with my little troop, and you will interrupt your pastimes with your grave and serious matters. I pray you, sir, if you be weary to return home to Edinburgh and keep your gravity and great embassy until the Queen comes hither, for I assure you you shall not get her here, for I know not myself where she is gone."

Driving with the English Ambassador Mary spoke, no doubt wistfully, of the times she had had in France and "the honour she had received there as the wife unto a great King". She concluded a long conversation with the impeccable sentiment: "How much better were it that we two being Queens so near akin, neighbours and living in one isle should be friends and live together like sisters, than by strange means divide ourselves to the hurt of us both!"

Randolph brought the matter round from these generalities to the question of Leicester. Mary answered:

"My mind towards him is such as it ought to be of a very noble man and such a one as the Queen your mistress my good sister had so well liked to be her husband if he were not her subject."

Mary was, perhaps, deluding Randolph, perhaps she had decided to make the best of a bad bargain, to accept Leicester and make a bid for the English Succession as her price for agreeing to this degrading marriage. But, at this very moment, Leicester himself and the Secretary Cecil were putting forward Darnley as likely to "hit the mark".

The Queen was often with him and said that "he was the loftiest and best-proportioned long man that she had ever seen".

Darnley was nineteen at this period and contemptuously termed by older men "lady faced" and more "like a woman than a man".

Lennox and his son were soon in Mary's favour. But Randolph wrote home that he saw "no great goodwill formed of him, Darnley. As Her Grace's good usage and often talks with him, her continuance of good visage, I think it proceeds rather from her own courteous nature than that anything is meant which some here fear may ensue." He seems, how-

ever, to have felt uneasy on the subject, for he admits afterwards that he could not tell what "affection might be stirred up" in Mary, nor how she might be moved "seeing she is a woman and in all things desires to have her own will".

Mary, probably already attracted by Darnley and playing for time, still told Randolph that she was ready to marry Leicester, though she "distrusted these long delays".

At this crisis of Mary's life when she had just met the man who was, in the most literal sense, to be fatal to her, Lord Bothwell returned from France where he had been Captain of the Scotch Guards, and installed himself in his Border Castle. He had no right to do so for he was still in disgrace for the cause for which he had broken prison.

He sent Murray of Tullibardine to plead his cause with the Queen, who seems to have listened willingly enough to the exile's suit, and this though everyone remembered that he had been accused of conspiring to take her by force and to kill those in chief credit about her. "She could not hate him," she said. But Moray declared that he or Bothwell must leave Scotland.

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While Moray gathered an army Bothwell hid in the neighbourhood of Haddington and Mary swore to Randolph upon her honour that never should the reckless Borderer receive favour at her hands. If Randolph may be believed, she had good cause to make such an oath, for a far more potent reason than the rumoured abduction plot.

Bothwell had said in France that both the Queens, Elizabeth and Mary, "would not make one honest woman, and as for his own, if she had taken any but a Cardinal for a lover she had been better borne with". It seems incredible that Bothwell should have dared to utter these words and still more incredible that Mary should not have been bitterly outraged and forever offended if he had done so. That it was even possible to voice to Mary the mere hint that she had been the mistress of the Cardinal, her uncle, is an odd sidelight on the tastes and morals of the age. Whether Bothwell made this accusation or not, the rumour was abroad, was repeated to Mary, and she seemed to be indifferent. Bedford, Governor of Berwick, thought she favoured Bothwell and would not have him "put to the horn".

Bothwell, however, did not think it wise to linger any

longer in Scotland. He was assured that he would receive an ill welcome in England, and therefore retired again to France.

Mary was becoming worn-out with the unutterably tedious marriage question. She had begun to realize that even if she were to sacrifice herself to marry Leicester Elizabeth could not be brought to the point about the succession.

"The Devil cumber you," said Moray to Randolph, "the Queen does nothing but weep and write."

Randolph himself saw her with tears in her eyes when she was watching Darnley and Moray's brother running at the ring on Leith sands, and when she "returned from her pastimes" observed "much sadness in her looks".

By the end of March Randolph was writing of Darnley that the "young, lusty, long lord looked ever so lofty in the Court where he went. I know not what alteration the sight of so fair a face daily in presence may work on Mary's heart, but hitherto I have espied nothing. I am somewhat suspicious."

While this "fair face" of Darnley was daily under Mary's observation she heard of the quarrel on the tennis court between the Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Leicester, which must have seemed to her like a bitter insult, and finally decided her against the match with Robert Dudley.

Elizabeth was watching the match and the Earl, becoming very heated, took the Queen's napkin out of her hand and wiped his face with it, which the Duke seeing said that he was "too saucy" and swore he would lay his racquet upon his face, whereupon "rose a great trouble and the Queen was sore offended with the Duke".

By April, Randolph was writing "the Queen's familiarity with him (Darnley) breeds no small suspicions, there is more intended than merely giving him honour for his nobility, or for the Queen's Majesty's (Elizabeth) sake, for whom it is said he was so well recommended. It is now commonly said, and I believe it is more than a rumour, that this Queen has already such good liking of him that she can be content to forsake all other offers of suitors and content herself with her own choice. I know not what Lethington knows or will utter, but am assured that, with the best of his country he partakes of their grief, the inconveniences, dangers that are like to ensue which he shall as soon find as any."

Neither Moray nor Lethington who, pensioners as they might be of Elizabeth, had been loyal servants so far to Mary could view with equanimity the growing ascendancy of Lennox's son. Why he had been put in Mary's way remains a puzzle. Randolph says that it was spoken to his face that Elizabeth had sent Darnley home on purpose to match the Queen "poorly and meanly". Considering Darnley's position as first Prince of the Blood after his father, Elizabeth must however have realized that if he and Mary were to have a child this would be inevitably the heir of the two kingdoms. Perhaps she was at once so malicious and so shrewd as to have perceived the exact value of Darnley and to have set him across Mary's way to ruin her in one fashion or another.

Mary's growing favour for Henry Darnley was causing scandal in the Court at Holyrood; she nursed him through an attack of measles with open devotion.

"What is thought of Darnley himself," writes Randolph to Cecil, "his behaviour, wit, and judgment, I would were less spoken than is, or less occasion for all men to enlarge their tongues as they do." And the English envoy curiously adds: "of this I have a greater number of particulars than I may well put in writing which shall not be secret to you, though I cannot utter them but with great grief of heart."

Randolph seems to have become an affectionate admirer of the young Queen of Scots and to have viewed with as sincere a grief as any man, even among her own so-called devoted servants, her headlong yielding to a powerful infatuation.

The question of Elizabeth's own marriage was still under discussion. The King of France, though he was but sixteen years of age, had been offered to her by Catherine de' Medici. Elizabeth refused, with some caustic comments on the youth of the suitor; she still continued to say that "as for the Earl of Leicester, though I've always loved his virtues, the aspirations towards honour and greatness which are in me cannot suffer him as a companion and husband". She also declared that the aspirations towards honour and greatness which *should* have been in Mary should not suffer her to take Darnley as a husband. Mary's marked favour towards this youth gave Elizabeth, she declared, "extreme vexation".

She sent Throckmorton in May 1564 to Edinburgh to warn the Queen of Scots that she might marry any eligible English

nobleman save Darnley. At the same time she put Lady Margaret Lennox, Darnley's mother, under arrest because her husband had refused to return to London, and at the same time Mary sent Maitland, probably most unwillingly, to Elizabeth to ask her consent for the Darnley marriage. Lethington was to say to Elizabeth that Mary, for her sake "having foreborne to hearken to a match with any foreign prince she would incline herself to marry Darnley if she had Elizabeth's goodwill and assent thereto".

Upon Darnley's recovery from his slight attack of illness, Mary created him Earl of Ross, and the state of affairs at this time may be best gathered from one of Randolph's vivid letters.

"Such discontent, large talk and open speech I never heard in any nation, but for myself see not but that it must burst out in great mischief for the Queen is suspected by many of her nobles and her people are discontented for her religion, this matchmaking without advice and others and evil things they suspect beside her unprincely behaviour in many of her doings.

"They will shortly either have it reformed or openly signify that what she has taken in hand tends to her own destruction and overthrow of the tranquillity of her realms and must be helped by sharper means. It is not one or two nor are they the meanest nor the unlikeliest to execute it. Their talk of this marriage is so contrary to their minds that they think their nation dishonoured, the Queen shamed, their country undone. A greater plague to herself than them there cannot be, a greater benefit to the Queen's match she could not have chanced, they must see this dishonour fall from her and her so matched where she should be ever assured that she could never attain to what she so earnestly looks for and without it would accord to nothing.

"She is now almost in utter contempt of her people and so far herself in doubt of them that without speedy redress, worse is to be feared. . . . Many grievous and sore words of late escape her against the Duke of Châtelherault, she mortally hates Argyll, and so far suspects Moray that not many days since she said she saw that he would set the Crown upon his own head. . . .

"How these men need look to themselves your honour sees. It is come to this point, that Moray and Argyll will at no time be in Court together, that if need be one may relieve

or support the other. The Duke (Châtelherault) lies at home, thinking himself happy if he may die in his bed."

Maitland returned to this dismal state of affairs from London; at the same time, Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, Mary's old adversary of the Paris days, arrived in Scotland with Elizabeth's warning. He found the Queen in Edinburgh Castle surrounded by her lords where he delivered Elizabeth's sharp message about her "misliking of Mary's hasty proceeding with the Lord Darnley wherein she erred by unadvisedness and rashness, the said Lord Darnley and his parents having failed in their duties to Elizabeth".

Mary replied, with what reads like good-humour, that Elizabeth "having objected to all the foreign suitors and Lord Darnley being of the blood royal she could not see what possible reasonable excuse her good sister could have for interfering".

She did not, however, commit herself to the proposed marriage but said she was resolving "on the man and the matter". At this period she decided to create Darnley Duke of Albany, but on Throckmorton's advice resolved to delay this honour. Throckmorton noted that she was not on the best of terms with Maitland, that dignified and intelligent statesman being obviously hurt and disgusted by her infatuation for the "fair face" of a boy.

This brilliant and sophisticated woman, so much admired, whose judgment and wit had been so often commended, threw to the winds, in a few weeks, all decorum and restraint and so far indulged her infatuation for Henry Darnley as to earn the disapproval and the pity of all who observed her behaviour. Throckmorton found her "either so captivated by love or cunning, or rather, say truly, by boasting or folly, that she is not able to keep promise with herself, and therefore not most able to keep promise with Your Majesty in these matters" (i.e., the conferring of the Dukedom of Albany on Darnley).

Throckmorton also reported that "this Queen is so far passed in this matter with Darnley as is irrevocable and no place left to dissolve the same persuasion by reasonable means". Randolph's letter to the Earl of Leicester on the same lamentable state of affairs strikes a note of sincere pity for the charming young Queen.

"I know not how to utter what I perceive of the pitiful and lamentable state of this poor Queen whom ever before I have seen so worthy, so wise, so honourable in all her doings

and at this present do find so altered with affection towards the Lord Darnley that he has brought her honour in question, her estate in havoc, her country to be torn in pieces! I see also the amity between the countries (England and Scotland) like to be dissolved and great mischief like to ensue. To whom this may be chiefly imputed, what crafty subtlety or devilish device has brought this to pass I know not, but woe worth the time, and so shall both England and Scotland say, that ever the Lord Darnley did set his foot in this country.

" This Queen in her love is so transported, and he grown so proud that to all honest men he is intolerable and almost forgetful of his duty to her already, that hath ventured so much for his sake.

" What shall become of her or what life with him she shall lead that taketh already so much upon him to control and to command her, I leave it to others to think! What shall be judged of him that for bringing a message from the Queen that was to his discontentment that he would with his dagger have slain the messenger: so little he yielded to her desire, so bold he was at the first with one of her councillors, yea, with him that most favoured his cause and was the chief worker of that which passed between them."

Excited and exalted by her sudden passion Mary became defiant towards Elizabeth. She told the English Queen's Ambassador plainly that she found there was another mind than her words purported in all Elizabeth's intrigues. She saw, what all Scotland affected to see, that Darnley had been sent to degrade her by an unworthy marriage, though she cared nothing for this, but she was offended by Leicester's indifference, by Moray's air of authority; she snapped her fingers at all of them and would have her way; Rizzio helped Darnley, these two were all in all to the Queen.

Mary so threw to the winds all dignity, reserve, and even decorum that Randolph believed firmly that she had been bewitched.

The only two serious statesmen who ever guided Mary's council, Moray and Maitland, were laid aside. " The Queen's brother liveth where he listed, Lethington hath now both time and leave enough to make court to his mistress"—the Mary Fleming whom he married about six months later.

The fury and exasperation that Mary was causing among the Scots nobility by her passionate favours to Darnley was

increased by the rise of Rizzio, then appointed her French secretary and employed on that foreign correspondence whereby Mary hoped to get foreign help to free her from both the Scotch and English violence and intrigues.

Randolph, as early as June, 1565, wrote: "David is he that now works all. He is secretary to the Queen and only governor to her good lord."

According to one account, Rizzio was a "*huomi de 28 anni in circa, accorto, savio et virtuoso*", but "*savio*" he certainly was not, and the other epithets may be equally inaccurate.

Among the early presents that Mary gave him was a length of black velvet brocaded with gold for her wedding festivities.

Sir James Melville endeavoured to warn both the Queen and Rizzio of the indiscretion of their friendship—the Italian made the excuse of his official position for being so frequently in the Queen's company—and Mary good-humouredly put by Melville's hints, declaring that Rizzio was no more in her company than former secretaries had been, and added that she would not be restrained whoever found fault, but dispense her favours as she pleased. With her hand in that of Melville, the young Queen asked, with a pathetic graciousness, her "loving and faithful servant" Melville, to "befriend Rizzio, who is hated without cause".

It is said that so great was Rizzio's influence, that even Moray sent him a costly diamond to keep his good graces; Moray, proud and careful, would never forgive these thrusts at his pride and his purse.

The favour shown to this low-born foreigner roused to intensity the smouldering fury, the discontent of the great Scottish lords, and further poisoned the minds of Moray and Lethington, now put aside from her Councils, against the Queen.

"The rumours here," wrote Randolph, on a note of fear, "are wonderful; men talk very strange; the hatred towards Darnley and his House marvellously great, his pride intolerable, his words not to be borne, but where no man dares to speak against. He spares not also in token of his manhood to let some blows fly where he knows they will be taken. The passions and furies I hear say he will sometimes be in are strange to believe. What cause people have to rejoice of this their worthy Prince, I leave the world to think. This they have said and thought, all they can find is nothing but that God must send him a short end or themselves a miserable life under such govern-

ment as this is like to be. What comfort can they look for at the Queen Majesty's (Elizabeth) hand, seeing the most part are persuaded that to this end and purpose he was sent to this country? . . . To see so many in hazard of life, land, and goods is a pity to think. To remedy this mischief either he must be taken away or those he hates so supported that what he intends for others may light upon himself."

In the same letter Randolph gives the following poignant and pitiful account of Mary.

"She is now so much altered from what she lately was, that who now beholds her does not think her the same. Her Majesty is laid aside—her wits not what they were—her beauty another than it was; her cheer and countenance changed into I wot not what. A woman more to be pitied than ever I saw—such a one now as neither her own regard, nor she takes count of any that is virtuous or good." Turning to his former explanation of this distressing riddle, Randolph adds: "The saying is that surely she is bewitched, the parties, the persons, are named to be the doers—the tokens, the rings, the bracelets are found and daily worn that contain the sacred mysteries."

Mary's whole-hearted champions, and they are many, declare that Randolph is unreliable as to her conduct at this period, and that his records are full of gossip, malicious and exaggerated, to please Queen Elizabeth. Indeed, this period of Mary's life, from her meeting with Darnley to her flight into England, has been the subject of so much controversy and is in itself so obscure, intricate, and mysterious that it is difficult to give a clear narrative account of it, and impossible to give any that may not be, in some particular or another, disputed or disproved. It is, obviously, as absurd to give full credence to Mary's apologists, who would declare that every evidence against her was either forged, written maliciously, or falsely, that she emerges from this confusion of horrible events impossibly pure, innocent and dignified, as it would be to give full credence to her detractors, who, by the violence of their denunciations, many of them palpably absurd and completely discredited, have done her cause more good than harm.

It is always possible that Thomas Randolph who, indeed, on later occasions, was not above forwarding foolish gossip to England, and who was on several points inconsistent and self-contradictory, was exaggerated in his accounts of Mary's

behaviour at this period, and of the re-action of Protestant Scotland to her conduct. The tone of the letters, however, appears to be sincere, the Englishman writes with what is surely a genuine compassion for the folly of this admired young Queen.

Here becomes of importance the person and character of Lord Darnley, the man who provoked in this extolled and princely woman so headlong and injudicious a passion. We have again to compose our picture from the mingled accounts of friends and foe, and from the disputed actions of his short life. He had been bred as an Englishman and had never been in Scotland before his visit in 1565, for he had been born during his father's banishment for high treason.

He and his brother, Charles Stewart, afterwards the father of another unhappy Stewart lady, Arabella, had been carefully educated by an ambitious and strong-minded mother with an eye to their possible chances as heirs to the throne of England and Scotland. They had been carefully trained in external graces and accomplishments. Henry Stewart had all the arts considered necessary for a young nobleman at that period. He was of a splendid presence and an athletic figure, of a height that impressed all who saw him and inclined even in his early youth to a certain fullness of body. He was an expert at tennis, at playing the lute, good at horsemanship, games, and sports. He could also assume polished, soft, and insinuating manners.

There could be no doubt that he was extremely handsome—"that fair face" noted Randolph, when referring to him, and even the cautious envoy seems to have thought that he would prove irresistible to any woman. Another English contemporary, however, named him "baby-face and womanish". The Spanish Ambassador wrote of him as an "amiable youth". He was "a comely prince of a large and fair stature and pleasant in countenance, as well exercised in martial pastimes and horseback as any prince of that age".

Stravenage, in the book dedicated to his son, describes him as "a young man of personage most worthy of an emperor, of a comely stature, of a most mild nature, and of sweet behaviour", and adds "that as soon as the Queen of Scotland saw him she fell in love with him".

Darnley's surviving portrait, in which he appears a round, suet-faced, stupid-looking schoolboy, conveys nothing of his attractions; of what was behind his physical charms that so

bedazzled Mary we know very little. Even younger than the Queen, who was in her twenty-third year, he had been bred by a passionately ambitious woman in the knowledge that he was first Prince of the Blood and yet in poverty, nor does he seem to have received from his father any kind of schooling in prudence, restraint, or careful behaviour. This is scarcely surprising, since there were hardly any of his rank and age who did exercise any such discretion. He had been encouraged to be arrogant and was, through his birth, proud.

He seems to have made no impression on the susceptible heart of Elizabeth, who resigned him with suspicious willingness to Mary, as if indeed she did, as some of the indignant Scots declared, desire the Queen to degrade herself by so mean a marriage, and did cunningly foresee the effect he would have on Mary.

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Much has been written of this unfortunate prince's licentious habits and drunken bouts; it would be strange had he been free from either of these defects, but we have no actual proof that he was in any direction more vicious than any other youths of his age and rank. He has probably been considerably maligned by those who endeavour to justify Mary by defaming him. His actions do indeed appear of lunatic folly, but it must be remembered, whatever Darnley's defects, that Mary chose him and chose him in the face of much good advice. It has been noted how she alienated Lethington and Moray, two men of intelligence and, up to that moment, of loyalty, who were the main props of her throne, for his sake, and it is difficult to understand how one with half the wit, brilliancy, accomplishments that Mary is said to have had, could have surrendered herself so suddenly and completely to a raw, petulant boy. Henry Stewart probably had more manly qualities than has been allowed for; his tragedy was largely due to his youth and inexperience and to the game that Mary played with him until he was exasperated almost into frenzy.

Considering him, however, from the most favourable angles, he does not seem to have been the man who should have inspired a passionate love on the part of a woman like Mary, had she been the dignified, accomplished princess, sensible of her birth and responsibility that some would have us believe she was. Subsequent events proved that she had no deep affection, respect or tenderness for the handsome youth. Nor did he,

according to Randolph, behave towards her in any such fashion as to evoke lofty sentiments. An over-mastering physical passion, and nothing else, cast the Queen into the arms of this stranger, and it was the undisguised display of this that, even in a coarse age, outraged the observers. Brutal and licentious as the Lords might be themselves, they disliked an open wantonness in their Queen—this pursuit of a beardless Adonis by a royal Venus was little to any man's taste. Hence the murmur of "sorcery" and the sullen blaming of Elizabeth, who had set this trap to humiliate Scotland.

The folly of the affair was startling, and disposes forever of Mary's claims to wisdom, prudence, or judgment. The utmost tact would have been required to make such a match pass and she used none. Nor was she capable of understanding her lover, of influencing him, of advising him, of persuading him into any policy of conciliation. If he returned her passion, or affected to do so, is not clear; if the tales of his violent rudeness be true, it would seem that he was thinking more of gaining his paltry ambitions than of winning Mary's heart; perhaps she had been too easy and her headlong amorousness had turned his head. Defying Moray, Lethington, and all the Lords, the untrained youth was foolish enough to rely on the love of the Queen that had, at sight of him, flared up like tow touched by fire, and was likely to flare out as soon.

And always, close to the Queen and her lover, was the detested figure of another fool, David Rizzio, the arrogant foreign secretary.

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However obscure, contradictory or bewildering the complicated intrigues that darken Mary's life at this period, there is no mystery about her situation or the main lines of her behaviour.

From that first meeting with Henry Stewart at the house of Lord Wemyss, her character developed rapidly. Ambition, pride, a passionate desire to have her own way, a vindictive anger and desire for revenge against all who had thwarted her animated her conduct. She had conceded much for the sake of retaining her throne; she had supported the Protestants against the Catholics (in the Huntly rebellion), she had signed severe laws against the professors of her own Faith, she had listened to Moray, Maitland, and their Puritan followers. She had endured the insolence of John Knox, who had named her Church "har-

lot " to her face. She had even had to put up with personal insults because she remained faithful to her own creed. The services in the Chapel at Holyrood were frequently interrupted by brawlers; Randolph details one of these extraordinary scenes :

" One Muffet, feigning himself mad, entered the Queen's Chapel, drew his sword, overthrew the chalices, candlesticks and Cross, sent off the priest, etc. At this the Queen is angry and many are glad."

It was inevitable that these things should rankle in Mary's mind. She resolved to be revenged on all her enemies. She was weary of Elizabeth's crooked policies and constant interference, and despaired of obtaining any concession from her as to the future. At last, it seemed to the harassed woman, was a chance of asserting herself, of shaking off Moray and the Reformers, of defying Elizabeth, of avenging the Treaty of Edinburgh, the disloyalty of the Lords, her mother's broken heart.

On the surface she may, to herself, have seemed to have every prospect of success. Her envoy, sent ostensibly on an embassage of compliment to Elizabeth, sounded the Spanish Ambassador as to the possibility of help from Philip II and the answer was favourable.

" All things now grow too libertine, and the Queen taketh upon her to do what she pleases," noted Randolph.

Hatred against Henry Stewart increased; not only his hereditary foes, the Hamiltons, but all the other nobles were secretly shifting into enmity towards him. Only Lord Ruthven, accused of being, like Earl Bothwell, a sorcerer, was suspected of encouraging the Queen in her licence and her passion. Moray saw his power wane daily. Henry Stewart, glancing at a map of Scotland and seeing the possessions of Moray marked thereon, " said it was too much ". Moray was indeed glutted with Church lands, but this speech was deemed over bold; Mary made her lover " excuse himself to Moray ". Sir James Melville in his gossiping " Memoirs " written long after these events, refers to Darnley as " the good young Prince, who failed rather for want of good counsel and experience than from any bad inclination ".

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Elizabeth and her Council declared against the Lennox match for Mary. Among those who signed this resolution was the Duke of Norfolk, who had himself been suggested as a possible

husband for Mary. Elizabeth had already recalled Lennox and his son from Scotland, at which the Lord Darnley protested to the English envoy. "Mr. Randolph, this is very hard and extreme, and what would you do if you were in my place?" When Randolph would not commit himself, Darnley added: "I will do what you would do if you were in my case, and yet I do not mind to return."

The return of Henry Stewart was indeed out of the question, the "so great tokens of love" that Randolph saw "daily pass" between the Queen and Darnley were perhaps really the raptures of a honeymoon, for Mary, according to some historians, was secretly married to Darnley at Stirling in the March of that year, 1565, that is, some ceremony was performed which she considered, or might persuade herself she considered, legal. The point seems obscure. It would be the knowledge of this secret marriage, of course, which caused Henry Stewart to assume those arrogant airs the Scotch nobility found so intolerable, which neither the Queen's influence nor the efforts of his friends were able to check.

Mary met Henry Stewart, a complete stranger, at Wemyss Castle on February 16th, and if this ceremony took place it was in March; in this case the persistent rumour that the Queen had been Lord Darnley's mistress long before the official wedding in July was virtually correct. Whatever value Mary attached to this "marriage" there can be little difference between such a sudden, secret, irregular union for one of her rank and an illicit love affair, and the fact that she could so instantly, under whatever cloak, indulge this lightning passion, reveals her character sharply and confirms the ugliest gossip of the Chastelard affair. A woman quite unversed in the alarms and excitements of physical love would not be likely to yield so suddenly.

While there is abundant evidence that Mary was what is termed "in love" with her husband, being wholly submissive to him and desiring to do him pleasure and honour in every direction, there is not a scrap of evidence, at this period, as to any feelings he may have felt for her. Not only was he void of any chivalrous gratitude or loyal affection towards her, but she seems to have inspired him with no passion, or at the best, with but a transient gust of liking.

Mary, in the secret ceremony at Stirling, had followed to its logical conclusion the irresistible impulse of passion. The young man was for the time all in all to her, and exalted and excited

by her love she was prepared to assert her personality and take affairs into her hands as she had never done before.

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Not since her coming into Scotland had she been so gay; "Never greater triumph in any time of Mass Popery than was at this last Easter . . . upon the Monday she (Mary) and her women apparellled themselves like bourgeois' wives and went upon their feet up and down the town. Of every man they met they took a pledge or a piece of money towards the banquet, and in the same lodging where I am accustomed to lodge, there was the dinner prepared and great cheer made."

Randolph frequently remarks on the poverty of Scotland and we hear nothing of any ordered finances or smooth machinery of government and, though there must have been made some attempt at this, the constant wars, rebellions, piracies and lawless acts must have made even rude tax collecting difficult; Mary and her nobles (except the prudent Moray and Morton) must frequently have been straitened in means. Yet there was much personal luxury. When Mary and Lord Darnley played Thomas Randolph and Mary Beaton at billiards, rings, watches and brooches were the stakes. The chambers of Lennox were "very well furnished, one especially rich and fair bed where his lordship lieth himself" as Randolph noted. "And he (Lennox) gave the Queen a marvellous fair and rich jewel, whereof there is made no small account. He presented also each of the Maries with such pretty things as he thought fitted for them—a clock and a dial curiously wrought and adorned with gems, and a looking-glass very richly set with stones in the four metals; to Maitland a very fair diamond in a ring; to Atholl another, as also somewhat to his wife. I know not what to divers others, but to Moray nothing." Doubtless Lennox understood where his money would be wasted. He brought seven hundred pounds with him from England, most of which he was supposed to have spent on presents.

The Queen "danced long and in a mask": she also "played at dice and lost to Lennox a pretty jewel of crystal well set in gold". There was a dark background to these festivities, there were "Scotts and Elliots" beheaded by torchlight on Castle Hill, and a quarrel between Maitland and Lord Seton filled the streets with five hundred men armed with "spear, sword and jack".

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When Throckmorton, sent to Scotland to warn Mary of

Elizabeth's disliking of the Lennox marriage, had delivered his message Mary had laughingly evaded him. She had drunk Elizabeth's health, adding courteously "*de bon cœur*", but she did not intend to be subservient to England. She seemed careless also of offending France. Catherine de' Medici had so disliked the idea of Mary's marriage with Leicester that she had threatened to stop her dowry if it took place: Mary could not have hoped that the Queen Dowager would view a union with Lord Darnley with much more equanimity, but Mary was indifferent; she undoubtedly intended to be absolute mistress of her fortunes and relied much on the possible alliance with Spain.

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Mary's Ambassador had little success with Elizabeth on the subject of the marriage of his Queen to Lord Darnley. The English Queen took it in such a way that "she flew into a rage" directly the subject was introduced. She said she was greatly displeased with the match because it had been arranged without her consent and for other reasons; Maitland asked her that these reasons might be handed to him in writing that he might show them to his Queen. Elizabeth refused this request.

Maitland then asked permission to visit Lady Margaret in the Tower and to hand her a letter which he had from his Queen for her and another from Lady Margaret's husband, to which Elizabeth replied she was greatly astonished that the Queen of Scotland should think that she would allow Lady Margaret to receive any letters, seeing that she was imprisoned for so grave a crime, i.e., the refusal of Lennox to return to England. Elizabeth also declined to accept a letter from Lennox, saying that she would "not accept letters from a traitor, as she would very soon proclaim him to be, and his son as well", upon which the Ambassador naturally remarked that there was nothing more for him to do but to depart. It is impossible to discover whether Elizabeth's wrath was feigned or no, whether she really was displeased at the projected marriage with Darnley, or merely playing a turn at her famous game of "shuttlecock".

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Randolph reported on the 9th of July that Mary and Darnley had been secretly married in Holyrood and had stayed together at Lord Seton's; on the 22nd of that month the banns for a public wedding were published and Lord Darnley, already Earl of Ross, was created Duke of Albany.

Mary rushed her fortunes to a climax; her lover was proclaimed King of Scotland, and she married him publicly in the Chapel Royal of Holyrood on the 29th of July, months before it was possible for the expected dispensation from Rome, necessary for their marriage as cousins, to arrive. That granted by Pius IV is dated Rome, September 25th, 1566. It was, therefore, doubtful whether from a strictly Roman Catholic point of view this much debated marriage was legal.

Randolph wrote an account of the ceremony on the last day of the month to the Earl of Leicester, who may have read with chagrin of a lost chance, or with relief of an escaped danger when he perused this description of the wedding of the perilous Mary to another English nobleman.

"This Queen is now become a wedded wife and her husband, the self-same day of their marriage, made a King. So many discontented minds, so misliking of the subjects to have these matters thus ordered in this sort to be brought to pass, I never heard of in any marriage."

The marriage was indeed bitterly unpopular, save among a faction. "As he was proclaimed King, no man said as much as Amen, saving his father that cried out aloud, 'God save His Grace!'"

The lowest opinion was held of the new King who flaunted his slippery honours with infatuate insolence. Well might Randolph make the sinister comment: "What shall become of him I know not; but it is greatly to be feared that he can have no long life among this people."

The young King was reckoned "proud, disdainful, suspicious"; the Queen was believed to have behaved "without fear of God, princely majesty, or care for her subjects". Randolph declares that her conduct was viewed with "utter contempt", not only by the common people but by the wisest in the land. Among these was Moray, who was "grieved to see the extreme folly of his Sovereign" and lamented "the state of the country that tended to utter ruin".

The tale that Mary was bewitched strengthened, so altered was she "in face, countenance and majesty" that she did not appear recognizable. Randolph, whose compassion for the Queen establishes the truth of his reports in so far as it shows he did not maliciously exaggerate, declares that Mary had a "misliking of her own doings" and that he was grieved to see her so ruin herself. This gives the impression of a creature

hurried on to her doom without her own volition. It is possible that Mary already, in July, repented the secret union of March.

It must be remembered that Mary's reputation not only suffered from the headlong marriage, but from the base-born favourite: "Signor David governeth all."

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This was the manner of this marriage, one of the most important and tragic in English history.

It took place on Sunday, in the morning, between five and six in the Chapel at Holyrood with a great train of nobles present. Mary had, since her coming from France worn, except on State and intimate occasions, mourning attire, and it was in this ill-omened garb that she entered the Chapel for her second marriage.

"She had upon her back a great mourning gown of black, the great wide mourning hood not unlike to that she wore the doleful day of the burial of her husband. She was led into the Chapel by the Earls of Lennox and Atholl and there she was left until her husband came, who also was conveyed by the same Lords. The ministers, two priests, there received them, the words were spoken, the rings, which were three, the middle a rich diamond, were put upon her finger, they knelt together and many prayers were said over them.

"He went to her chamber and within a space she followed and there, as was required according to the solemnity, she cast off her mourning and laid aside those sorrowful garments to give herself to a pleasanter life. After some pretty refusal, more, I believe, for manner's sake than grief of heart, she suffered them that stood by, every man that could approach, to take out a pin and so being committed to her ladies, changed her garments."

In the following passage Randolph contradicts his former letters and states his belief that Mary was not formerly either Darnley's wife or his mistress. There was much rejoicing, feasting and good cheer after the marriage and Mary may, for once, if only for a brief space, have felt both triumphant and happy.

Of Darnley's behaviour we have no record save the unflattering account given by Randolph:—"his words to all men against whom he conceiveth any displeasure, however so unjust ever it be, are so proud and spiteful that rather he seemeth a monarch

of the world than he that not long since we have seen and known as the Lord Darnley.

"He looketh now for reverence to many that have little will to give it to him, and though some there are that do give it, that think him little worthy of it.

"All honour that may be attributed into any man by his wife he hath it fully and wholly, all praise that may be spoken of him he lacketh not from herself, all the dignities that she can endow him with, are already given and taken. No man pleaseth her that contenteth not him, and what may I say more? She has given over unto him her whole will to be ruled and guided as himself best likes. She can as much prevail on him in anything that is against his will as your lordship may with me to persuade me that I should hang myself. This last dignity out of hand to have him proclaimed King she would have had deferred until it was agreed by Parliament or he had been himself twenty-one years of age, that things done in his name might have the better authority. He would in no case have it deferred one day and either then or never."

This is a strange picture of the young bridegroom's towering arrogance, and the royal bride's infatuation and almost cringing submission; no marvel that men thought a spell had been placed on Mary.

David Rizzio rose to power with Henry Stewart, whose tool he may have been, whose servant and jackal he certainly was for a short period. He was the master of Mary's correspondence, and one of the excuses given by Mary's defenders for her employment of this low-born foreigner was that she could find none other capable of dealing with the most vital correspondence with France, Spain, and Italy which she was then undertaking, her main objects being to obtain Roman Catholic backing and money from one of these powers. This seems a paltry reason; Mary could surely, without any difficulty, have found a person able to do these duties who would not have caused the scandal that David Rizzio provoked.

The third among her supporters and advisers was, grotesquely enough, Lord Bothwell. The month of her marriage she sent a relation of his, Hepburn of Riccartoun, to bring back that turbulent nobleman from Paris. Riccartoun was made prisoner by the English, but the bold Bothwell, after a narrow escape himself, came into Mary's presence by the 20th of September.

Mary confirmed him in the Lieutenancy of the Border, which Darnley had wanted for his father. This seems to be the first time she thwarted him or denied one of his wishes; it was, perhaps, the first small rift in their strange love affair.

Besides the pampered, immature husband, greedy for royal honours but careless of royal responsibility, a sly and insolent Italian secretary of low birth of whom we know so little, the discredited Bothwell, "a lewd-minded man crazy with ambition", a certain number of Roman Catholics rallied round Mary. But the feeling of the country, even of those of her own Faith, was bitterly against her and her unnatural combination of the arrogant young husband, a stranger to the Scotch, the insolent secretary, a foreign "servant" and the Border Lord with the worst possible reputation.

Mary was, at this period, the autumn of 1565, recently married on an impulse of wilful passion and holding in high favour two men, one of whom she afterwards married under scandalous circumstances, and the other of whom was supposed to be her lover. These facts suffice, without any need to credit gossip or scandalous rumours, to prove that Mary's reputation must have become forever tarnished by this time, and that she was quite reckless or quite foolish. Either she did not care a jot for anything save for the indulgences of her own caprices and desires, or she was so lacking in common sense as to think that her desperately imprudent behaviour could be glossed over.

No woman, however careful, gifted, popular, fascinating, would have found it easy to rule Scotland or to find a husband to please the Scotch. Perhaps Mary realized this and, in despair, decided to please herself as she could hope to please no one else. Certainly, it is difficult to see how, by even a prudent marriage to a Protestant, she could have saved herself from the dangers that beset her; her inexperience, her sex, her training, her youth, her religion, were all against her chance of success. On the other hand, it is also clear that, even had her circumstances been far more peaceful and hopeful than they were, she would have ruined everything by such a marriage as she made with such a youth as Henry Stewart, and by the taking of such favourites as David Rizzio and Lord Bothwell.

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The first trouble after her marriage came from Moray; there was a story of a plot on his part to kidnap the Queen and her

betrothed as they rode to Edinburgh before their wedding; Mary offered her half-brother, who had withdrawn from Court, a safe conduct for himself and eighty friends in order that he might clear his character of this charge.

Moray was too prudent to accept the invitation and was "put to the horn", or outlawed as a rebel.

Mary's blood was up; it would seem that she had always disliked her half-brother, perhaps mistrusted him, perhaps become impatient under his yoke and at his policies. She could never have liked, she must always indeed have followed with abhorrence, the persecution of the Roman Catholics. She thought that with her husband by her side, David Rizzio to write her letters, and Bothwell to lead her armies, she might be able to revenge the long years of suffering and humiliation endured by her mother and herself at the hands of the Lords of the Congregation, at those of the agents and spies of England and Elizabeth.

She was tolerant; she issued a proclamation permitting every man to live according to his own conscience, although the Pope had consented to her marriage on the grounds that it was an expedient to restore the true Faith. But it was not toleration that the Protestants wished; they desired the Romanists completely expelled from Scotland. But while Knox and the other preachers fulminated against her with increased bitterness and fury, while Elizabeth was preparing, cautiously and furtively, to help the Scotch rebels as she had helped them six years before against Mary of Guise, the Queen in these, the early triumphant days of her marriage, was still writing to Philip II imploring his support for the re-establishment and maintenance of the Catholic religion in Scotland.

By September she was in arms and had chased the fallen rebellious Lords of the Congregation, who included Moray, from one point to another, while Elizabeth still postponed any active help despite Randolph's appeal for assistance from his mistress.

"They are like", he wrote on September 20th, meaning the Lords, "to have marvellous adventures, for of themselves, they are not able to withstand her force."

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The Hamiltons, who had, of course, shown disgust at this triumph of the Lennox faction culminating in the marriage of Henry Stewart, had been disgraced and ruined. A considerable number of Mary's subjects had rallied round her; she felt,

evidently, secure, and declared boldly to Randolph that she would rather lose her crown "than not be revenged upon her half-brother". Randolph adds: "I may conjecture that there is some heavy matter at her heart against him than she will not utter to any." Some of her expressions against her brother were such as could not be with decency reported.

Randolph hints at the black trouble between Mary and Moray. This was not perhaps the latter's opposition to her marriage with Darnley, but his resentment of the favours she had shown to Rizzio. Randolph thought that Moray knew too much, "some secret part not to be named for reverence' sake", and the inference is that Mary, not six weeks a bride, had already received Rizzio as a lover and that Moray knew it, or the reference is, as some think, to an even darker secret of a love more than fraternal followed by bitter loathing. Such tales were to be whispered of the Valois Princes and their sisters.

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On September 19th the Earl of Bedford had written to Cecil from Berwick where he was Governor: "What countenance that Queen shows to David I will not write, for the honour due to the person of a Queen", while Elizabeth had told the French Ambassador, Paul de Foix, in the following months that Mary's hatred of Moray was because he wanted to hang Rizzio, whom she loved and favoured, giving him greater influence than was good, either for her interests or her honour. Whether Mary had this personal reason or another, even more intimate, for her hatred of her brother, it is impossible to decide, but at least she seemed determined to shake off all his influence and not only that, but to ruin him. She declared to Randolph that "she saw whereabout he went and that he would set the Crown upon his own head". Perhaps these sentiments were inspired by King Henry, who from the first had mistrusted and loathed the Queen's half-brother, the man who was most likely to defeat him of his ambitions.

Elizabeth conveyed pecuniary help to the Lords to the amount of three thousand pounds sent through the Earl of Bedford, for they, like Mary, were desperate for money to continue the affray. Other help and open countenance Elizabeth denied sternly. In her letter to the Lords of the Congregation, October 1st, 1565, Elizabeth refused all assistance and rebuked them for bearing arms against their Sovereign. Elizabeth was always afraid of rebellion and never encouraged it among subjects of

another monarch lest it might set a bad example to her own people.

Mary was riding all over the place, "besieging houses and taking all they have", as Randolph put it, striving to raise money to encourage her subjects, high-spirited, alert, roused at last, determined to assert her authority as Queen and her rights as a woman. "Bothwell takes great things upon him and promises much—a fit captain for so loose a company . . ." wrote Randolph, adding bitterly: "To be short, whatever she can do by authority, by requests, favours or benefits, all is in one so it serves to overthrow them that she is offended with."

One of Mary's principal characteristics, afterwards noted by everyone who came in contact with her, now appears for the first time—she was vindictive. She had a keen desire for revenge for injuries received, for insults taken, for wrongs suspected—a spirit not often but sometimes found with a generous nature.

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Morton, the "Black Douglas", was serving with the Queen, either because he thought his interests lay that way, or as Moray's spy. With rigorous marches she and the King chased the rebels about the country, she wearing scarlet and gold over armour, a steel casque on her head, loaded pistols at her holster.

Among the Lords who joined her was George Gordon, Earl of Huntly, who ruined and disgraced, had long lain in Dunbar a prisoner, and was son of the Cock of the North who had fallen dead from his horse without a word or groan at Corrichie. She had evidently persuaded him that Moray and not herself was responsible for the ruin of his family; she promised him his dignity and estates, and he marched with her from Edinburgh, together with the young King on October 8th, the whole royal force behind her. The object was to confront the rebels then gathered at Dumfries.

Mary, intoxicated by her new-found power, resolved to be done with Elizabeth and her meddlings. The day that she left Edinburgh on her war-like expedition against the rebels she wrote this letter.

"MADAM,

I understand you are offended without just cause against the King, my husband, and myself. What is worse, your servants on the Border threaten to burn and plunder our subjects who wish to aid us against our rebels. If it please you to make your cause that

of our traitors, which I cannot believe, we shall be compelled not to conceal it from our princely ally.

Your affectionate good sister and cousin,
MARY R."

While Mary thus wrote to the woman whom for so long and so hopelessly she had been striving to conciliate, Randolph was giving a very different account of this triumphant departure from Edinburgh. The Englishman had been grieved and startled by the sudden ascendancy of Bothwell, the most discreditable of the three men (Darnley, himself, and Rizzio) who then swayed Mary's counsels. Randolph could not understand that Bothwell should be received into favour after "the foul words" he had spoken of her, words which Randolph had himself repeated to Mary, and which she had heard confirmed by other witnesses. It was indeed curious that Mary could have overlooked such an affront, curious that Randolph could have discussed with her such a matter, and curious that she should, as the Englishman writes bitterly, "be now content to make much of him, to credit him, and to place him in honour above any subject she hath".

It is in this letter that Randolph says: "The hatred she conceives against my lord Moray is neither for his religion nor yet that he desires to take the Crown from her, but that she knoweth he understandeth some secret part not to be named for reverence sake. It standeth not with her honour. Here is the mischief, it is the grief, how this may be salved and repaired it passeth, I trow, man's wit to consider."

Randolph's next sentence seems to point to some knowledge on his part of a true affection and loyal devotion on the part of Moray towards his half-sister.

"Such reverence, for all that, he hath to his Sovereign, that I am sure there are very few that know these things, and to have the obloquy and reproach on her removed, I believe he would quit the country for all the days of his life. Jars are already risen between her and her husband . . . part of her jewels have been lately exchanged for fifteen marks sterling, there was no money in Edinburgh to be got. What honours when she rode this time out of town! She had with her but one woman, what safe assurance she thinks herself in, if it be true what I heard that she has a secret of privy defence on her, a helmet for her head, a dagger at her saddle. Supposing it is not true, what can

be argued for the love of those who report it? I write these things more from grief of heart than that I take pleasure to set forth any purchase of shame, especially such as we ought to reverence if they know their duty.

"I should trouble you too long if I wrote everything I hear of Darnley's words and doings, his boasting to his friends here, and assurance of them who would, if they knew, be the first to seek revenge in false reports."

In September, Cecil had already written to Sir Thomas Smith in Paris: "You know the inner quality of the match, therefore the event is uncertain. The young King is so insolent that his father, weary of his Government, has departed from the Court."

Three months then, after Mary's public marriage she was already showing more confidence in and admitting more intimacy with the Piedmontese than she used with her husband, the object of her impetuous and outspoken passion. Randolph, who regretted that a stranger of base origin should have the whole guiding of Queen and country, makes it clear that Rizzio did not enjoy his honours with any more meekness than did the King.

It is not to be supposed that the rough and proud Scottish nobles who found it impossible to swallow the insolence of Henry, who was at least a proclaimed King, one of themselves, and a royal Stewart, could have suffered the airs of this presumptuous foreigner. Without listening to either Mary's champions or her detractors but judging solely from facts it remains amazing that she should have so lacked any prudence or commonsense as to have supposed that her singling out of David Rizzio could long continue without fatal results both to herself and the favourite. And if she was not at this period a woman whose roused passions and sense of power overcame in her all shame and modesty, she was at least stupidly headstrong and imprudent. It is impossible not to sympathize with Moray and Lethington, and their sullen withdrawal into rebellion.

"I may well say that a more wilful woman and one more wedded to her own opinion without order, reason, or discretion I never did know or hear of," wrote Randolph. "Her husband, in all these conditions, and many worse, passeth herself, her counsel are men never esteemed for wisdom or honesty. Herself and all about her are so ill-spoken of that worse cannot be thought than is common in men's mouths. You will find

these things strange, especially confirmed by me, though often-times in word and writing to set forth her praises wherever I could, and I would hardly believe that she is so much changed in her nature that she beareth only the shape of that woman she was before."

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As Mary drew on to Dumfries the rebels escaped over the Border. Two days before she left Edinburgh Moray was at Carlisle. Mary left Lord Bothwell, in capacity of Lord Lieutenant, to guard the Border, and returned to Holyrood, cheated of her revenge, perhaps angry on that account, still believing herself what she had never been and never was to be, absolute Sovereign in Scotland.

Moray blamed Elizabeth for leading him on into his useless rebellion. He presented himself before her at the end of October, when she rebuked him publicly, as a rebel, in the presence of the French Ambassador.

Elizabeth sent an account to Randolph, to show to Mary, of this public humiliation of Moray. She wished, she said, that her dear sister could have been present to hear with her own ears the terms in which she had repulsed her rebel. "So far", declared the Queen of England emphatically, "was she from espousing the cause of the traitors, that she would hold herself disgraced if she had so much as tacitly borne with them, she wished her name might be blotted out from the list of princes as unworthy to hold a place among them if she had done any such thing."

Mary, at the same time, was expecting a present of twenty thousand crowns from King Philip of Spain, which must have been of much more satisfaction to her than Elizabeth's false protestation of friendship and loyalty. She was not long, however, left to rejoice in the prospect of this assistance, for Yaxley, her envoy, was drowned on his return, the ship being wrecked on the Northumbrian coast. The money was still on his body when it was washed ashore and it was claimed by the Earl of Northumberland, in virtue of his foreshore rights, who succeeded in holding the money despite the claims of the English and Scottish Crowns. In this, as in more important matters, sheer misfortune seemed to overshadow Mary's course.

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By Christmas, the burst of triumph, the exaltation of love and passion, the glimpse of freedom and absolute sovereignty

were over for Mary. She had been married six months and was drifting apart from her husband. Her hopes, her dignity, her safety went down the wind with the dying gusts of her short passion. What led to this increasing coldness we do not know; it seems obvious that Mary was definitely out of love with the young King when she refused him the Crown Matrimonial, a slight for which he blamed the increasing influence of David Rizzio.

"I never knew so many alterations as are now in this government," wrote Randolph. "Awhile there was nothing but King and Queen, and His Majesty and Hers; now 'Queen's husband' is the most common word; he was put first in all writings, now he is placed second."

The coinage, with Mary's face upon it as well as Henry's, was called in, an ugly gossip and scandal began to darken round the King and Queen. The young King was himself leading a vicious and disgusting life, it was reported, and drinking himself into a state of stupidity. He had been openly drunk at an entertainment in a merchant's house in Edinburgh; the Queen had endeavoured to rebuke him and he had given her such words that she had left the place in tears. "Darnley is in great misliking with the Queen, she is very weary of him and, as some judge, will be more so ere long."

On the other hand there is the denial by the Lennox faction of any vice on the King's part; his wife's behaviour at least made his position very difficult. He mingled little in affairs and was often away hunting with his English train.

By March, 1566, Randolph knew that David Rizzio's life was in danger and, possibly, the life of Mary herself. "I know that there are practices in hand to contrive between the father and the son to come to the Crown against her will. I know that if that takes effect which is intended, David, with the consent of the King, shall have his throat cut within these ten days. Many things more grievous and worse than these are brought to my ear, yea, of things intended against her own person which, because I think it better to keep it secret than write to the secretary (Cecil), I speak not of them but now to your lordship."

It must, then, have been an almost open secret at the Court that violence was intended against the person of the presumptuous Piedmontese. Mary evidently had no inkling and the Italian himself no warning. Secretary Cecil was silent. It

would not even have occurred to him to try to save the life of so useless a person as Rizzio. Lethington had given Cecil a hint of what was to come in another, more subtle, sense.

"Marry, I see no certain way unless we strike at the very root. You know where it lieth, so far as my judgment can reach the sooner all things are patched up the less danger there is of inconvenience."

To add to the fury of the nobles against Rizzio it was rumoured that the title of Chancellor had just been taken from the Earl Morton, Moray's friend and ally, and was to be given to the Italian.

In the opinion of some authorities it was Lennox, of whom, indeed, little good is known, who was the villain of the piece in the tragedy about to begin in Holyrood. It was he, they say, who instilled into the unstable mind of his son all manner of jealousies and fears, inflaming his ambition, assuring him that he, as a man, should be the prime ruler of Scotland and his wife take a place of mere obedience beside him, and instilling into his distracted ears poisonous suggestions of Mary's dishonourable conduct with David Rizzio.

This may be so, Lennox may have played Iago to his son, or it may have been on his own observation that the King founded his own jealous rage. Be that as it may, it is clear that in the early part of the year 1566 the King must have been under the stress of some powerful emotion, either completely fuddled by continual drinking, or absolutely under the influence of stronger minds than his own, for he took the most extreme steps.

The second-hand story that Paul de Foix, the French Ambassador in London, sent to his Court, that the King had burst open his wife's bedchamber door and found Rizzio hidden in a closet, with a mantle over his nightshirt, is usually discredited, but it should be noted. Why should De Foix have reported to Mary's relations such a tale if he did not believe in it? He must, surely, have relied on his informant. Just such an incident would be sufficient explanation of the King's conduct. He had other and undisputed grievances; Mary's refusal to confirm him in the Crown Matrimonial, her use of an iron stamp with his signature so that State documents could be passed without his knowledge, and a lack of settled revenues.

Whatever his prime motive, King Henry, about a year from his secret marriage, and knowing of the advanced pregnancy of

his wife, entered into a Bond, or Band, as is generally spelt, with the men whom he most hated and who had most cause to hate him, the late rebellious Lords and some others such as Lord Ochiltree, to murder David Rizzio and in such a way that the Queen's life might also be endangered. The Bond was supposed to be the signing of an association to murder the favourite of the Queen and the enemy of the State. But, in subscribing to it, the King went to the extreme length of tarnishing the honour of his wife by declaring that he believed David Rizzio to be her lover, thus throwing doubts on the legitimacy of the child she was about to bear.

Either the Queen was surrounded by uncommonly unscrupulous slanderers or she had conducted herself with excessive imprudence, for when her condition first became hinted at, Randolph had written his regret "that a son of David should bear rule over Scotland". It was a stigma that was to remain always on the name of James VI, and it was so obviously against the interests of the King and the Lennox faction to discredit the legitimacy of the child whose birth would consolidate their position that it is difficult not to believe that the wretched husband, either falsely wrought upon or convinced of an obvious truth, really believed what he declared about the Queen and Rizzio.¹

There were other Articles in the Bond for the murder of Rizzio: Henry Stewart was to obtain the Crown Matrimonial, the rebel Lords were to be pardoned and restored to their estates. It was signed on March 1st, and by March 6th the Earl of Bedford and Thomas Randolph had heard of it. Letters dedicated by Bedford, but written for prudence sake by Randolph, are strong evidence against Mary, and do not show the King in a good light.

"The matter is this," wrote the Englishman, "you have heard of the discords and jars between this Queen and her husband, partly as she has refused him the Crown Matrimonial and partly for that he hath assured knowledge of such usage of himself that altogether is intolerable to be borne which, if it were not over well known, we should both be very loath to think that it could be true. To take away this occasion of slander he is himself determined to be at the apprehension and execution

¹ The term British Solomon as applied to James VI and I is supposed to derive from a gibe uttered by Henry IV of France—"Solomon, son of David."

of him, whom he is able, manifested, and charged with the crime and to have done him the most dishonour that can be done to any man, much more being as he is. We need not more plainly to describe the person, you have heard of the man of whom we mean. The time of execution and performance of these matters is before the Parliament and clear as it is."

According to this letter (and there seems no reason to suppose that either Randolph or Bedford would have written a deliberate falsehood), Mary's relations with Rizzio were common property, and this within a few months of her love-match. Atrocious as was the King's behaviour, and bitterly as he has been condemned alike by Mary's friends and foes for his part in the dismal tragedy of David Rizzio, it may be perhaps said for him that, young and inexperienced as he was, the effect on him, first of Mary's unrestrained passions, then of her sudden coldness and barefaced infidelity, would have been sufficient to turn his head and cause him to set his hand even to the most horrible revenge.

It is clear from the words of the Bond that no pity was to be shown for Mary, nor any regard to her condition or the well-being of the future child; "the deed may chance to take place in one of the Queen's houses or in the presence of the Queen's Majesty". Not only this, but Mary was to be mortally shamed and disgraced by the slaying in her presence of the man who was supposed to be her lover.

Despite the two warning letters sent to England there was no one at that Court who interfered. David Rizzio was allowed to go on to his fate.

Very little is known of this Piedmontese with the bass voice, the skill on the lute, the arrogant airs, and the address to insinuate himself into the good graces of Mary Stewart. By some he is described as ugly, by some as a young man, by others as aged fifty-four years. A little drawing of him, if it be authentic, shows him as a young man with large black eyes, commonplace features, wearing a small cap and holding a lute. There is nothing in the countenance to distinguish him from that of any of his contemporaries, but if this be a true likeness the man at least was young, the smooth features are those of a youth; it is incredible that he was old, if his brother Giuseppe was, as is said, aged eighteen.

While this deadly conspiracy was ripening Mary had discovered Thomas Randolph's intrigue with the rebels and he had been banished to Berwick where he remained with Bedford, the

Governor, and continued to send such reports as he could gather to Queen Elizabeth.

Besides the Band for the murder of Rizzio, Henry Stewart had signed another which was to safeguard his accomplices. The King, who signed himself "Henry R.", was "to obtain their remission, stop their forfeiture, restore their lands, support them in the exercise of the Reformed religion and maintain them as a good master should".

Besides the great nobles who pledged themselves to the murder of the favourite, Darnley declared that he had engaged "lords, barons, freeholders, gentlemen, merchants, and crafts men to assist us in this enterprise which cannot be finished without great hazard, and because it may chance that there be certain great personages present who may make them to withstand our enterprise and whereby certain of them may be slain", the King guaranteed to protect his friends against the blood feud of such great persons.

While this conspiracy was in progress Mary presided at the marriage of another favourite—Lord Bothwell, who, despite his previous entanglements, now openly took to wife Jane Gordon, daughter of the old Cock of the North slain at Corrichie. She was sister to the then reigning Earl of Huntly who had lately been taken into favour with the Queen and who had made common cause with Bothwell against Moray and the other rebel lords. She was also sister of that John Gordon who had been hacked to death in Mary's presence at Inverness.

Jane Gordon remained a Catholic, though her brother, the desperate and flighty Earl of Huntly, had become a Protestant. Her groom settled on her Castle Crichton (where the marriage of Lady Jane Hepburn took place in the Queen's presence in 1562) and other estates. But most of the property was heavily mortgaged, and the bride's dowry of twelve thousand marks was to be applied to redeeming it. One of the witnesses to the marriage contract was David Chalmers, Chancellor of Ross, whose house, according to Buchanan, served as a convenience in Bothwell's intrigue with the Queen.

The marriage was in the old royal church of Holyrood, then used by the Protestants, not in the chapel, for Bothwell withheld the Queen's wish for a marriage "in the chapel at the Mass", i.e., a Romanist ceremony. The dignitary of the Reformed Church who was oddly entitled Archbishop of Athens,

Alexander Gordon, Bishop of Galloway, the bride's uncle, performed the ceremony, February 24th.

It was the Queen herself who made this match, at whose instance and under what impulse we do not know. She presented the bride, a well-educated girl of twenty, careless as to clothes and with a taste for poetry, with a rich wedding gown. There was kinship between the two parties and a dispensation was granted by the Pope and issued by the Archbishop of St. Andrews. The bride was a Roman Catholic, but the marriage took place in the Reformed Church, February 24th.

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A few days after, the murder of Rizzio, that Knox found "worthy of all praise," took place.

There are several accounts of this famous event, of which the most important are those of Lord Ruthven, partisan though it may be and possibly touched up afterwards by Cecil, and that of the Queen herself, little as this may be relied upon.

The plain facts are these :

On that Saturday evening Mary was at supper with her half-sister, Jane Stewart, two years divorced from Archibald, Earl of Argyll, Arthur Erskine, of Blackgrange, brother to the Earl of Mar, and considered by Knox "the most pestilent Papist in the realm", and Master of the House, Lord Robert Stewart, brother to Moray and the Countess of Argyll, who was Prior of Holyrood House and Robert Beaton, Laird of Creich, keeper of the Palace at Falkland and High Steward; the sixth member of the party, that almost filled the small closet, was David Rizzio. Mary's bedroom next door communicated with the King's chamber immediately beneath.

Making use of his private staircase the King entered the little supper-room and took a seat beside his wife. He was almost immediately followed by the assassins led by Lord Ruthven, then stricken with a mortal illness but nevertheless wearing full armour, and George Douglas, of the family of the Earl of Angus, a noted "*bravo*" and akin to Bothwell.

There were about twenty of these men and all were more or less armed. Outside the gates of the palace the foxy Morton and the brutal Lindsay had gathered a large force, five hundred it is said, sufficient to keep any attempt at rescue at bay.

Ruthven, a ghastly figure, suffering from internal inflammation, entered the little supper-room with a drawn sword in his hand

Mary, in terror, asked him his business. Ruthven replied that, though very sick he was there for her good.

The Queen answered that he came not in the fashion of one that meant good. Ruthven said : "There is no harm intended to Your Grace nor to anyone but yonder poltroon, David. It is he with whom I have to speak."

The Queen then demanded what he had done. Ruthven replied : "Ask the King, your husband, madam."

At this the Queen turned aghast to the King (it was strange she had not done so before), and asked him the meaning of Ruthven's words, and he replied, either bitterly or sullenly : "I know nothing of the matter."

The Queen, angered, then ordered Ruthven to leave the chamber, and her companions endeavoured to turn him out. Waving his sword he exclaimed : "Lay no hands on me for I will not be handled."

It was perhaps an agreed upon signal for as he spoke others of the assassins forced into the little apartment. The wretched Italian, who, with the smallest modicum of prudence or common-sense might have seen that such a fate was in store for him, tried to hide behind the Queen's skirts and she made an effort to protect him.

The King held her round the waist, back against the wall, and the Secretary was dragged away, and, though it had been the intention of the lords "to save him till the morning" and then publicly hang him, their rage at finding their victim in their power overcame them, and the Italian was stabbed to death and thrown out of the window into the courtyard below.

Thus the facts as far as they can be ascertained; thus Mary's version of the tragedy, which she sent to Archbishop Beaton, her Ambassador in Paris, save that she states, what Ruthven denied, that actual violence was used in her presence, weapons being struck across her, at Rizzio as he cowered behind her for shelter, so that she was put in fear of her life and that of her child.

In the conclusion of this letter Mary besought her Ambassador to communicate the contents to the Court to prevent false reports from being circulated.

"Do not fail to impart it to the Ambassadors."

She sent a similar account to the King and the Queen-Mother of France. Both these letters show a ready wit, a keen intelligence, and not the least trace of emotion. If Mary were overthrown by the murder of Rizzio in her presence she contrived

in these epistles to conceal her fear and her anguish, and if the man was anything more to her than a useful tool she contrived to conceal that also.

Ruthven's account, which represents the other side of the question, is more dramatic than that given by the Queen. There is a sordid horror about his relation which hers lacks. His account of what passed between her and the King on that Monday night seems to touch the depths of human misery, degradation, and grossness.

Ruthven was a dying man when at Berwick he gave his account of the murder of Rizzio for the benefit of Cecil, and in this task he was helped by Morton.

He begins his relation by dwelling on his sickness. He was, he declared, so feeble and weakened through sickness and medicine that scarcely he might walk the length of his chamber without sitting down. And while he was in this state the King sent for him, telling him all his grievances against David Rizzio, and that he was expecting him as a friend and a kinsman to assist him in making away with David, to which Ruthven replied that the King was too young and facile and he could not trust him, declaring that once before he had given him advice for his own good and the King had immediately told the Queen who had visited them both with anger.

George Douglas, bastard son of the Earl of Angus, who was the intermediary at this affair, took this answer to the King, who thereupon swore that whatever advice Lord Ruthven would give him he would not reveal either to the Queen's Majesty or to any other.

Ruthven, then, according to his own account, began to consider how he could bring in his fellow Protestants and the banished lords on the strength of this scheme to slaughter David. After "long reasoning and divers days travelling the King was contented that they should come home into the realm of Scotland", in other words he was willing that his banished enemies should return if only they would help him in removing the offensive foreigner.

Ruthven then gives the text of the Bonds and relates how they were signed. According to this, evidently Mary suspected the King was in some scheme against her, "and sought by subtle means to learn of him what was in his mind". She was not, however, successful in doing this, and so fierce was the King's rage against David that "he sent daily to the Lord Ruthven

saying that he could not abide David any longer, and if his slaughter was not hastened he would slay him himself, yea, though it were in the Queen's Majesty's own chamber."

Ruthven objected to these violent courses, not through any tenderness for the victim or out of consideration for the Queen, but because it was not decent that he, the King, should put a hand on such a mean person. And Ruthven, perhaps trying to justify himself, declares here that when Darnley was told that it was not convenient nor honourable to slay David notwithstanding the offences he had made, but rather to take him and give him judgment by the nobility, the King's Majesty answered that it "was cumbersome", that he might escape, but it could always be depended on that he could be taken and hanged or despatched otherwise. Then came the journey of the Queen and her husband to Leith, the King continually sending messages to Ruthven by George Douglas "that everything might be ready for the slaying of David on the day of the return to Edinburgh, otherwise he would put the same in execution with his own hands".

Ruthven, meanwhile, despite his first real or feigned reluctances, was now busy in bringing in Morton, Lindsay, and a great number of barons, gentlemen, and freeholders into the scheme. All preparations seemed to be made in a practical and cold-blooded fashion; Ruthven thought there would be sufficient numbers, that is of assassins, ready against Friday or Saturday, the 8th or 9th of March. He suggested that the Italian "be seized in his own chamber or when passing through the gardens". But the King refused for bitter reasons, which were that the Italian stayed late at night with the Queen's Majesty. He lay in "the over-cabinet, and other whiles in Señor Francisco's cabinet, and sometimes in his own in which he had sundry back doors and windows so that he might escape out of them".

The King insisted that he would have Rizzio taken at his wife's table in her presence. Out of some show of consideration for Mary, Ruthven and the lords were against this brutal proceeding. The husband, however, persisted in his own scheme, and drew up the plan of the murder himself.

The lords, however, were still slightly mistrustful of the King's youth, facility and violence. "Considering he was a young prince and having a lovely princess to lie in his arms afterwards who might persuade him to deny all that he had done for his cause and to pretend that others persuaded him the same, they thought it necessary to have security thereon."

Another Bond was drawn up which is very curious :

"We, Henry, by the grace of God, King of Scotland and Lieutenant to the Queen's Majesty, for so much we have in consideration of the gentle and good nature with many other good qualities of Her Majesty, we have thought pity and also think it great conscience to us that are her husband to suffer her to be abused or confused by certain privy persons, wicked and ungodly, not regarding Her Majesty's, ay, nor the nobility thereof, nor the commonwealth of the same, but seeking their own commodity and private gains, especially a strange Italian called David."

The case against David could scarcely be better put. At the end of the Bond the King, on the word of a Prince, guaranteed to keep harmless (that is free from harm) the aforesaid earls, lords, barons, freeholders, gentlemen, merchants, craftsmen, "in our utter power. In witness whereof we have subscribed this with our own hand in Edinburgh the first of March, 1565."

On the Saturday the young King put into practice the device he had carefully rehearsed. Having supped himself, he went up to the Queen's little cabinet leaving open behind him the door of the secret passage.

Ruthven, as had been arranged, came up through this privy way into the Queen's chamber, and through the chamber into the cabinet where he found "the Queen's Majesty sitting at her supper at the midst of a little table, the Lady Argyll sitting at one end and David at the head of the table with his cap on his head, the King seated with the Queen's Majesty with his hand about her waist".

A conversation then followed between Ruthven and Mary, much the same as that she reports in her own letter which must, therefore, be substantially correct. According to Ruthven, he spoke at much greater length than Mary represents and dared to name amongst the grievances against the Italian "that he hath offended your Majesty's honour, which I dare not be so bold to speak of". He also accused the Italian of causing a great number of the chief nobility to be banished, and of taking bribes and goods for any grant or office that passed through his hands. He then said to the King :

"Sir, take the Queen's Majesty, your Sovereign and wife, to you."

Mary was "all amazed and wist not what to do". She, however, stood in front of the Italian, who grasped the pleats

of her gown, and leant back in the window-place, his dagger drawn in his hand. Then the Abbot of Holyrood House, the Laird of Creich, Master of the Household, the King's Apothecary and one of his Grooms of the Chamber, began to seize Ruthven. He pulled out his dagger and freed himself, while more came in, and said to them, "Lay not hands on me, for I will not be handled." When the others entered, Ruthven, he says, put up his dagger.

His version of the overthrowing of the table given by Mary is that with the rushing in of men the board fell to the wall, with the meats and candles thereon, and the Lady of Argyll took up one of the candles in her hand. "At the same instant the Lord Ruthven took the Queen in his arms and put her into the King's arms, entreating Her Majesty not to be afraid, for there was no man there who would do Her Majesty's body more harm than their own heart. He assured Her Majesty that all that was done was with the King's own deed and assent."

Rizzio was then dragged out of the Queen's presence, down the privy way to the King's chamber, where there were a great number standing "who were so vehemently moved against the said David that they could not abide any longer, but must do him in at the Queen's far door in the upper chamber".

Lindsay then came from their Majesties (probably from Darnley only) to pass to David's chamber to fetch a black coffe with writings in cypher, which the Earl of Morton delivered to them. He gave "the chamber in keeping to John Sempill, son of the Lord Sempill, with the whole goods therein, gold, silver and apparel".

Mary and her husband then came forth from the cabinet into the Queen's chamber where Ruthven, though he does not say so, must have been present, for he details a long conversation, Mary reproaching her husband:

"My lord, why have you caused to do this wicked deed to me considering I took you from a base estate and made you my husband? What offence have I made you that you should have done me such shame?"

The King retorted with his grievances and the neglect he had received from his wife since she had taken Rizzio into favour, and reminded her that though he might be "of the baser breed, she had promised obedience to him on their marriage day".

Mary, whose words read more as if inspired by furious anger

than by grief, then threatened her husband with "all the shame of that night's work", and told him that she would never live with him as his wife again, and she "would never rest until he had a sorer heart than she had then".

Ruthven intervened, told her to make the best of the business, that the government should be as well guided as ever and everything be the same. Ruthven then asked the Queen's pardon, sank on a coffer, and called for a drink "for God's sake".

A Frenchman brought him a cup of wine, which Ruthven drank. Mary began "to rail", as he termed it, against him.

"Is this your sickness, Lord Ruthven?"

The dying man replied :

"God forbid that your Majesty had such a sickness for I would rather give all the movable goods that I have than have it."

Mary's wrath now turned on Ruthven. She threatened that if "she or her child or the commonwealth perished she would leave power to her friends to revenge her on Lord Ruthven and his posterity".

With what seemed like hysterical defiance the helpless woman reminded the assassin that she had "the King of Spain her great friend, the Emperor likewise, and the King of France her good brother, the Cardinal of Lorraine and her uncles in France, besides the Pope's Holiness and many other princes in Italy".

To which Ruthven replied that "these noble princes were overgreat personages to meddle with such a poor man as he was, being Her Majesty's own subject".

Mary repeated her threats, upon which Ruthven told her that "if she did not like any of that night's business she might charge the King her husband and none of her subjects".

Tumult now broke out in and around the House of Holyrood, for Mary's supporters, Bothwell, his newly-made brother-in-law, Huntly, Atholl, Caithness and Sutherland hearing that some bloody business was afoot had tried to force their way, with their own servants and officers at the palace, into the house and were fighting in the Close against the Earl of Morton and his company.

The King would have gone down, but Lord Ruthven stayed him, and ill as he was descended himself in the midst of the tumult, but by that time the Queen's supporters had been beaten off and had been obliged to pass up the gallery into their own chambers

Ruthven went to Lord Bothwell's room, where he found other nobles of the Queen's party, Huntly, Sutherland, Caithness and Grant, gathered. Ruthven, according to his account, was able to talk over these restless spirits; he assured them that whatever had been done that night had been done by the King's Majesty's own command, and that the banished lords would be there before day.

Bothwell and his friends seemed to accept this explanation, wine was handed round and Ruthven passed on to the chamber of Atholl, his friend. While he was arguing with this nobleman, Bothwell and Huntly, evidently feeling outnumbered and in a dangerous position, escaped out of Holyrood by a low window, "leaping over a low window towards the little garden where the lions were lodged", says Melville, while Ruthven, after talking over Atholl, who was not irritated at the murder but exasperated because he had not been warned of it before, returned to the unfortunate Queen who was still miserably arguing with the King, he telling her that the banished lords were to return and she reminding him that it was for his sake that they had been sent away.

By this time the Provost of Edinburgh had been roused, the alarm bell had been rung, and a great crowd of armed men came to the outer court of the palace. The King appeared at the window and told them to return to their houses, declaring that the Queen's Majesty and he were in good health. They dispersed without giving Mary a chance to state her side of the case, or to declare if she needed their help or no.

Ruthven once more presented himself before the wretched Queen who was still with her husband in her chamber, and showed her "that there was no harm done and that the lords and all others were merry". Mary asked "what had become of David?" Ruthven did not tell her that the Italian had been slain, but replied that he believed he was in the King's chamber. Mary then wanted to know, no doubt with great bitterness, why Ruthven had been conspiring with Moray, his enemy? She referred to her half-brother's anger at the present of a magic ring with a pointed diamond in it which Ruthven had once given her for it was supposed "to have a virtue to keep me from poisoning".

Ruthven then began arguing about the ring, saying he did not believe in its magic qualities and that he had only given it to Mary to reassure her, and finally, though not remarkably

sensitive nor kind hearted, began to notice "that the Queen's Majesty was weary".

Weary indeed in mind, body and soul must Mary have been, though neither this account nor her own makes any mention of the fainting fit with which other versions say she was afflicted, nor anything of the sudden fear of a miscarriage and the calling of the midwife.

Ruthven "drew the King away and with him all his company", so that Mary was once more left alone with her ladies and grooms of her chamber.

While the King was debauching future courses with the conspirators, the gates were locked, "the Queen's Majesty walking in her chamber, and Lord Ruthven taking air upon the lower floor in the privy passages", the King ordered that David was to be hurled down the steps of the stairs from the place where he was slain and brought to the porter's lodge, where he was stripped by the porter's servants, who remarked: "This hath been his destiny, for it was upon this chest that he first laid when he entered into this place; now here he lieth again a very ingrate and misknowing knave."

The unfortunate Italian seems to have been loathed by everyone, high and low alike. Ruthven adds: "The King's wynyard (dagger) was found sticking in David's side after he was dead, but always the Queen enquired of the King where his wynyard was, who answered that 'he wit not well'. 'Well,' said she, 'it will be known thereafterwards.'"

The King went to bed but rose again at eight, and passed into the Queen's chamber, and the terrible arguments of the night before were renewed, "the one grating upon the other until it was ten o'clock" as Ruthven puts it.

Early that Sunday morning when the King had written out his Proclamation to be read at the Market Cross, "Moray and his accomplices arrived at Holyrood and were thankfully received by the King".

Mary had heard of her half-brother's arrival and sent for him. She received him pleasantly.

The conspirators feared that the Queen might endeavour to escape from Holyrood among the women who were allowed evidently to go in and out freely, so the King issued orders that no one was "to pass forth un-dismuffled".

The Queen, however overwhelmed by this horrible event, whatever her feelings may have been towards David, whatever

desires for revenge or rage may have consumed her, soon gathered her forces together and prepared the part she was to play, with somewhat sinister wit and courage. Not only did she receive willingly her half-brother, the banished Moray, who had returned without leave a few hours after the murder which she must have guessed he had a hand in, but she began to talk over her husband.

During that Sunday he remained shut in with her, and the end of their conference was the promise that he should pass the night with her, peace between them being made over the blood of David Rizzio.

The lords perceived this beginning "of the reconciliation between the King and Queen" which they liked in no way; they feared they would be betrayed by "the proud tyrant and young fool" as they were soon to name the King, that the seductive princess would work her way with him sooner than they had feared.

"Perceiving," as Ruthven says, "he grew effeminate again" (that is under the Queen's influence), they warned him lest he undertook any action of which he would repent, words that Darnley may well have remembered afterwards.

The King, however, persisted in clearing the Queen's apartment. Lord Ruthven lay in the King's wardrobe, and in the middle of that Sunday night George Douglas came to him and showed him the King was fallen asleep in his own room. Ruthven and Douglas made several attempts to wake the King that he might keep his appointment with Mary; doubtless they feared her deep offence at such boorish conduct. The King, however, slept till six in the morning. Ruthven then roused him and reproved him that he had not kept his promise to Mary. The answer was that he had fallen off into a dead sleep and could not awaken.

It was then early on the Monday morning and the King went up to the Queen's chamber and sat down beside her bed. She, in revenge no doubt, for his late bitter slight, lay still for an hour and would not speak, feigning sleep.

At last she asked him why he had not come up to her the night before, and he replied he had fallen into a dead sleep. He offered her some caresses, which Mary refused, saying she was sick. The King put in some pleas for the recall of the banished lords and the murder of Rizzio, on which Mary seemed content. The King, completely deceived, came down

very merrily, declaring to his fellow conspirators that all was well. But they warned him of the Queen, "by reason she had been trained up from her youth in the Court of France and well in the affairs of intrigue".

The King then dressed, and at nine o'clock went again into the Queen's chamber, when after two hours' further reasoning with her he came out and told the Earls Ruthven and Lindsay "that all was well and the Queen would forgive them". But neither of the two grim Scotsmen was impressed by the King's reassurances; they utterly and always mistrusted Mary. "All that speaking," they declared, "was but policy," and suppose promises had been made, little or nothing of them would be kept.

The arguments went on until after dinner, when the mid-wife and the doctor both assured the King that the Queen might risk a miscarriage unless she was moved to some freer air. But the earls and lords still feared that this was "but craft of policy", upon which the King swore that "she was a true princess and that thing she promised he would set his life by the same".

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At last, between four and five in the afternoon the King took Lords Morton and Moray and Lord Ruthven in with him to the Queen's outer chamber and Mary entered. The earls and lords went down on their knees and made their excuses to the Queen. Mary received them with a pleasant graciousness which must have been very difficult for her to assume. She gave them all the security they asked for and reminded them, what was true enough, that she was "never bloodthirsty nor greedy upon their lands and goods since her coming into Scotland", and promised to bury and put all things in oblivion as if they had never been. Then taking the King by one arm and her half-brother with the other she walked up and down her outer chamber for the space of an hour, probably trying to control a rising hysteria.

The Articles for the lords' and barons' security were then engrossed for Mary's signature. Ruthven continued to protest to the King that "all is but a deceit that is meant towards us, and the Queen's Majesty will pass away secretly and take you with her, either to the Castle of Edinburgh, or else Dunbar". He added sternly that if any such treachery were intended it would come upon the King's head and posterity.

The King passed his word continually that both he and his wife were to be trusted. The conspirators were sufficiently placated and baffled to leave Holyrood House for the Earl of Morton's, where they took supper. After this meal Archibald Douglas came to the King to see if the Queen had subscribed the Articles.

She had not done so. The King's excuse was that she had gone to bed ill, and would sign the Articles in the morning.

Upon this, the whole troop of earls, lords, and barons with their gentlemen "returned to their beds believing surely the Queen's Majesty's promise and the King's".

They had, however, as they had at first feared, been utterly deceived; the Queen had beguiled her husband, and about one o'clock she and the King went "out at the back door that passed through the wine cellar where Arthur Erskine the Captain of the Guard and other six or seven persons met Her Majesty with her horses and rode towards Dunbar".

Lord Sempill hastened after the Queen for the performance of the Articles that promised their security. This Mary would not give. "She wrote to her nobility to meet her at Haddington, the 17th or 18th of March, and called to arms all manner of men between sixteen and sixty years of age. She also commanded Lord Erskine, Captain of the Castle of Edinburgh, to shut up the town unless the lords departed out of it."

At this Morton, Ruthven, and their accomplices fled into England. The Queen caused a ban "to be made that the said Earl Morton, Lord Ruthven, and Lindsay and their accomplices should be pursued with fire and sword".

Ruthven adds to this account, written when he was safely over the English frontier, a protestation against actual violence being used in the Queen's presence as Mary was declaring. "Her Majesty alleges that the night that David was slain, some held pistols to Her Majesty, some drew wynaards so near her that she felt the coldness, and many other such things which we take God to record was never meant nor done. The said David received never a stroke in her presence, nor was stricken until he was at the farthest door of Her Majesty's outer chamber. Her Majesty makes all these allegations to draw the Earl Morton, the Lords Ruthven and Lindsay and their accomplices in greater hatred from other foreign princes."

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It was Bothwell and his brother-in-law, Huntly, who had

contrived the daring escape from Holyrood, but the Queen owed as much to her own presence of mind and courage, to say nothing of her ready guile, as to the bold daring of these two lords. Her own account of how she won over her unstable husband is given in her letter to the Archbishop of Glasgow in Paris. Her relation of how the Provost appeared before Holyrood and Ruthven's account of this incident differ considerably.

"The Provost of the town of Edinburgh," wrote Mary, "having understood this tumult in our palace, caused to ring their common bell and came to us in great number and desired to have seen our presence, to commune with us and to have known our welfare, to whom we were not permitted to give answer being extremely menaced by our lords, who in our face declared that if we desired to have spoken them they should cut us into collops and cast them over the wall."

Mary goes on to say that Moray was sorry when he saw her distress, also that the council of the conspirators, "rebels" as she names them, decided that she was to be sent to Stirling, there "to be kept until she had approved all their wicked enterprises, established their religion and given to the King the Crown Matrimonial of the whole government of our realm". If she did not consent she was to be put to death or detained in perpetual captivity.

Mary does not say who gave her this information as to what passed in the councils of the rebels. Nothing of this is mentioned in Ruthven's account. In unemotional fashion she relates how she used her arts on her husband, to detach him from his accomplices, and to assist her in her determination to escape.

"That night we declared our state to the King our husband" (this must refer to the Monday night), "certifying him how miserably he would be handled if he permitted the lords to prevail, and how unacceptable it would be to other princes, our confederates, in case he altered the religion. By this persuasion he was induced to condescend to the purpose taken by us to retire in our company to Dunbar; we being minded to have gotten ourselves relieved of this tension, desired in a quiet manner the Earls of Bothwell and Huntly to prepare some way whereby we might escape, who not doubting therein, at the least taking no regard to hazard their lives on that behalf, devised that we should have come over the walls of the palace in the night on chairs which they had in readiness to that effect soon after."

Mary did not, however, need to escape in this difficult manner from Holyrood, but went through the underground passages in the Chapel of the royal tombs. In her letter to the King of France and Catherine de' Medici she says : " Our fears for our personal safety still continuing we made the King comprehend our position and how he himself might be reduced to greater straits if the conspirators prevailed against us, and how foreign potentates and particularly our own allies would be displeased if we made any change as to religion. Upon these considerations the King decided to depart threon and in our company for Dunbar, whither we went the same night, being attended by the Captain of our Guard by Arthur Erskine our Squire and two other persons only.

" We had already resolved to liberate ourselves from this captivity and secretly communicated with the Earls of Bothwell and Huntly to devise some mode for so doing."

A note of profound admiration for her bold deliverers is then apparent when she adds: " Then these noblemen being without fear and willing to sacrifice their lives, to this end arranged to let us down at night from the walls of our palace in a chair by ropes and other devices that they had prepared."

The exploits of Bothwell on this occasion were indeed such as Mary most intensely admired.

" His dexterity in escaping," she wrote afterwards, " and how suddenly by his prudence not only were we delivered out of prison, but also that whole company of conspirators dissolved, we shall never forget."

It is extraordinary that Ruthven, Lindsay and Morton had not contrived some fashion of putting Bothwell and their friends out of the way before they proceeded on their own schemes against David. It is also remarkable that they could have believed that they " could talk them over " afterwards and so allowed them a chance to escape.

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Mary acted with the greatest possible spirit and courage, whatever she felt of horror, shame, thirst for revenge, rage or grief, she mastered all these emotions with vigour and promptitude. Despite her dismal experiences her health must have been good, and the talk of a possible miscarriage must have been what Ruthven suspected it to be, a mere trick, otherwise Mary could not possibly have undertaken the midnight escape from Holyrood and the ride to Dunbar.

"We granted," as she says in her letters to Catherine de' Medici, "our pardon to the Earls of Moray and Argyll as long as they broke relations with the conspirators and retired from the Court."

Like many another reckless and artful woman, Mary's ready wit in a crisis was as notable as was her folly in bringing a crisis about. Her cleverness was very superficial and only exercised in emergencies, or she would have seen long before Rizzio was murdered that she was playing an impossible game between favourite, husband, and the Lords who were aided by such a man as Moray.

She showed those extremes of conduct that are acknowledged to be feminine characteristics; a foolish, wilful drifting to disaster, a bold ability, a fertile resource when disaster arrived. Mary's behaviour on this occasion has been much extolled, her misery greatly pitied, and it is clear that she extricated herself with great skill from most appalling circumstances, which, however, she had brought about by her own actions. But her conduct was not that of a noble, innocent woman outraged by a baseless and gross suspicion, incensed by the unprovoked murder of a blameless servant. The Queen displayed the tricks of the adroit courtesan; she spoke fair the Lords for whom she could have felt nothing but fury, she promised a pardon that she did not intend to give, she schemed an escape which was to be the prelude to a vengeance; her recorded words reveal vindictiveness and rage far more than distress or horror.

She used feminine art to win over her husband, not because she really wished to detach him from his accomplices for his own sake, for she must have known that his betrayal of the Lords doomed him, but because she could not, without his connivance, escape from Holyrood. The King's attitude is difficult to understand; did he, glutted by the murder of his rival, really hope for a reconciliation with his wife? Could he possibly have believed that she could protect him from the men whom he had so instantly betrayed? The explanation might be that he was physically enthralled by her, and that, after their long quarrel, her assumed tenderness had bemused his faculties.

But the Claude Nau "Memoirs", written under Mary's supervision, relate that on that night flight to Dunbar the King jeered at his wife because, in her condition, she was not able to keep up with him on horseback. This outrage must have

lingered in Mary's mind many years for her to have told it to Nau long after Henry Darnley was dust, and, if it be true, it proves that she had no hold of love, affection, or pity, over her husband, and renders his conduct, in flying with her, inexplicable. "He is known to be a fool", Randolph had written, and like a fool he certainly behaved, and with a disregard of inevitable consequences that passes folly and becomes the behaviour of one doomed.

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Mary rested five days at Dunbar and drew her net, whatever she fashioned it of, closer round her husband. She induced him to swear that he was guiltless of the Rizzio murder. It should be noted that it was greatly to her advantage to do this for it thus imputed the crime not to personal but to political motives. If the King had ordered the taking off of a man whom he believed to be her lover, Mary was publicly smirched, if, however, he had known nothing of a crime inspired purely by the jealousy of the Lords, then she might escape dishonour. By what inducement she won her unhappy lord to thus protect her, whom he had been so anxious to ruin, at the sacrifice of himself we do not know, but she was able to write, when she returned triumphantly, "accompanied numerously by her subjects" to Edinburgh and the conspirators had retired from the Capital and many of them were then fugitives: "We have caused all their possessions to be seized, determined to proceed against them with the utmost vigour. To this end (revenge on the Lords) we are satisfied that the King our husband will act in unison with us because he has declared in the presence of the Lords of our Privy Council his innocence of the last outrage upon us, that he never either advised or approved it."

Not satisfied by this private statement, Mary urged her husband to issue a public Proclamation. He had proved even more completely and more rapidly a traitor than even the most suspicious of his late accomplices had suspected.

Referring to "the slanderous, irreverent backbiting of the King's Majesty, of the late conspiracy and cruel murder committed in the presence of the Queen's Majesty", Henry Stewart in this Proclamation, that was published at Edinburgh on March 20th, plainly declared upon "his honour, fidelity, and the word of a prince" that he never knew of "any part of the said treasonable conspiracy, whereof he is slanderously

and falsely accused", nor never "counselled, commanded, consented, assisted, or approved the same".

The reply of the infuriated conspirators to this crazy treachery was to send Mary copies of the two Bonds that her husband had signed. She could not have been surprised. From that moment the King was doomed.

Randolph, who was with Bedford, the Governor of Berwick, observing as best he could these dangerous Scottish affairs from a safe distance (he had feared imprisonment and even death while in Edinburgh and had had to withdraw), wrote another account of this famous crime which seems to be based on the reports of a certain Captain Carew, evidently the English agent in the Scottish Capital. The account is much the same as that of Lord Ruthven and the Queen herself. The cabinet where the fatal supper took place is mentioned as being about twelve foot square, furnished with a day bed and table. The detail, an important one, that David had been discovered upon this bed is again mentioned. Bedford and Randolph say that Lord Morton and Lord Lindsay had intended "to reserve him", that is, David, and the next day to hang him, but so many being about that bore him ill-will one thrust him in the body with a dagger, and after him a great many others, so that he had in his body about sixty wounds. "It is told for certain that the King's own dagger was left in him, but whether he struck him or not we cannot know for certain. He was not slain in the Queen's presence, as was said, but going down the stairs out of the chamber."

The interview subsequent on the dragging away of David between the Queen and her husband is almost exactly the same as that given in Ruthven's account, except that the Englishmen add the further information that Mary said to the King: "Well, you have taken your last from me and your farewells." To which Ruthven, with a Puritanical air, reminded Mary that the King was her husband. Upon which the Queen retorted on Ruthven his own matrimonial troubles. "Why may not I leave him as well as your wife did her husband? Others have done the same." Lord Ruthven said that she (that is Lady Ruthven) "was lawfully divorced from her husband". Besides "this man (meaning David) was mean and base, an enemy to nobility, a shame to her, and destruction to her grace and country".

" Well," said she, " it shall be dear blood to some of you if his be spilled."

" God forbid," said the Lord Ruthven, " for the more your Grace show yourself offended the world will judge the worst."

According to this account Mary was continually weeping. The dispatch tells of the reconciliation of the Queen with her husband (which took place in the hearing of the Lord Ruthven), and that he was overcome by sloth and did not keep his appointment. The arrival of Moray is described and the amiable meeting between him and his sister. Melville, in his " Memoirs ", says that the unhappy woman threw herself into her half-brother's arms and both of them were moved into tears. The account by Randolph says what neither of the others has mentioned: " The Queen sent for Lethington, and in gentle words devised him that he would persuade that she might have her liberty and the guard about her removed."

Lethington who had been, at least, passively privy to the assassination of David was sorry for the Queen, or believed in her cause. He allowed the guards to be removed. The Englishmen do not mention Bothwell as having engineered the escape, but merely say that " about twelve of the clock at night she conveyed herself a private way out of the house ", and that she, her husband and one gentlewoman " came to the place where Arthur Erskine, the Captain of her Guard, kept the horses and so rode her way behind Arthur Erskine until she came to Seton. There she took a horse to herself and rode to Dunbar and the Castle, where resorted to her the Lord Huntly and Bothwell and so divers of the whole country."

The Englishmen state that the Queen on her return to Edinburgh did not lodge in Holyrood but in a house in the town in the High Street. They mention the King's extraordinarily base and foolish treachery. " The King has utterly forsaken them, that is the conspirators, and protested before the Councils that he did not consent to the death of David which was sore against his will, and will neither maintain them nor defend them. Thereupon the next day the public declaration was nailed to the Market Cross of Edinburgh, the 21st of this instant, against the Lords, declaring the King's innocence in this matter."

Henry Stewart had gone even further than this betrayal of

his former accomplices. He had given the Queen details of every one concerned in the late plot, and among them he named Lethington, who was thereupon ordered to enter himself prisoner at Inverness. "The Lord Bothwell is entered into all the lands that the Lord of Lethington had in his possession."

The Englishmen had heard that Mary was determined on a sweeping revenge. "The Queen hath caused a ban to be made and will that all men who are friends to any of those that were privy to David's death shall prescribe to pursue them, to do their uttermost to apprehend them and bring them to the place of government. Some have prescribed and others have refused, and as we hear that is the cause of the imprisonment of John Landring and his son."

Gossipy details are added about "the great substance he had (that is David Rizzio), and which is much spoken of, some say in gold to the value of two thousand pounds sterling. The apparel was very good and it is said there were fourteen pair of velvet hose.

"The chamber was well furnished, armour, daggers, pistolets, harquebusses, twenty-two swords. Of all this nothing was spoiled nor likely to be save two or three daggs (pistols). He had the custody of all the Queen's letters, which were delivered unlooked-upon. Here are the jewels he had hanging about his neck of some kind that cannot be heard of; he had upon his back when he was slain a nightgown of damask, furred, with a satin doublet and hose of russet velvet." At the end of this report the two Englishmen add: "My Lord Ruthven is very sick, keeping most to his bed."

This stalwart noble died a few weeks later, no doubt with a sense of not having lived in vain.

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From Dunbar, March 15th, Mary wrote to Elizabeth a spirited epistle, which was in fact a warning to the English Queen not to interfere again in Scotch affairs by aiding the rebels. However magnanimously Mary may have spoken to the rebel Lords when they were on their knees making their submission to her in Holyrood, this letter proves that she was then only acting.

"Some of our subjects and councils have lately manifestly shown what men they are, as first have taken our house, slain our most special servant in our own presence and thereby held

our proper person captive treasonably whereby we were constrained to escape straightly about midnight out of our palace at Holyrood House, a place where we are for the present in the greatest danger, fear of our lives, and evil estate."

Despite her pride and courage Mary was exhausted, almost at the point of collapse.

"We thought to have written this to you with our own hands for the better understanding of our meaning, but in truth we are so tired and ill-at-ease through riding twenty miles in five hours of the night with a frequent sickness and evil disposition for the occasion of our child that we could not."

Elizabeth was always far from sympathizing with rebels. She heard with horror of the murder of Rizzio, declaring that if such a deed had been done in her presence "we would have snatched our husband's dagger from his waist and used it on him".

The English Queen had her own harassing troubles thick upon her shoulders. She was ill herself, "her bones could be counted", a stone was supposed to be forming in her kidneys and she was falling into a consumption. She was tormented by the marriage question; Catherine de' Medici persisted in offering her Charles IX, the negotiations for the hand of the Archduke Charles were dragging on. Another cause of uneasiness for Elizabeth was the Catholic League which she and her ministers suspected to have been formed among all the Roman Catholic powers, and which was for the stamping out, by every means, of Protestantism. It is now known that no such League was formed; the rumour of it, and the thought that the Queen of Scots might join it, was, however, a definite anxiety to Elizabeth, who well knew that her own Roman Catholic subjects were hoping to one day have the Queen of Scots on the English throne. Nor had Mary, Elizabeth believed, forgotten her early ambitions in this direction. It was reported by Bedford that Mary, seeing a picture of Elizabeth in a merchant's house in Edinburgh, was asked if it was like the Queen of England, and had replied: "No, it is not like her, for I am the Queen of England."

Elizabeth and her ministers feared that Mary was actively and successfully intriguing with her uncle, the redoubtable Cardinal of Lorraine, the Pope, and the King of Spain to gain the English Crown for herself and her husband.

Mary had certainly sent the Bishop of Dunblane to Rome for Papal assistance while the Cardinal of Lorraine's envoy came to Scotland; affairs looked dangerous for Elizabeth, England, and Protestantism. Nor were their fears altogether misplaced; if there was no Catholic League, Pius V, newly elected, was at least anxious to form one, and the Bishop of Mondovi, writing to the Cardinal Alessandria, says he made the suggestion that a massacre of all the Protestants in Scotland would be one way, at least, out of Mary's difficulties. The Italian Bishop's comments on the Queen's affairs and her husband's character confirm other accounts of her position at this period.

"The King her husband is an ambitious, inconstant youth; he continues still to go to Mass and maintains strict friendship and intercourse with the rebels in order to preserve and increase his authority. It has forced the Queen in self-defence to pardon the Earl of Moray, her bastard brother, the Earl of Argyll, the husband of her bastard sister, and allows such confidence in the heretics that she has appointed heretics as Captain of her Body-guard, namely the Earl of Bothwell and the Laird of Traquair, who command a hundred horse and three hundred foot respectively. The Governor of Edinburgh Castle, by name Lord Erskine, whom the Queen has made Earl of Mar, is also a heretic." Laureo, Bishop of Mondovi, got no farther than Paris on his Scotch journey; he was entrusted with 20,000 crowns for Mary, whom the Pope termed "a woman with a man's heart".

Mary declined the Papal proposal for a massacre of the Protestants in Scotland and seemed gratified by Elizabeth's friendliness. The English Queen indeed appeared to sympathize warmly with her sister in the outrage that had been committed in her presence and on her person. If Darnley had been her husband, she declared, she would never have seen him again, and she sent reassurances of her countenance and assistance to Mary by means of Robert Melville, brother of Sir James Melville. He also was to carry warnings from Elizabeth to both the King and Moray to be faithful to Mary, or to incur Her Britannic Majesty's displeasure.

Mary responded warmly, she always was for political reasons desirous of a friendship with Queen Elizabeth, and she never missed the chance for courtesy and graciousness. From Edinburgh, April 4th, she sent her a warm letter of gratitude. Elizabeth then had not listened to gossip, or at least did not allow it to affect her conduct. She could not have believed what Cecil

told the French Ambassador, that David Rizzio had been discovered in Mary's embrace, nor any of the other of the ugly tales of Mary which had been so prevalent in Scotland and so eagerly sent to England.

The attitude of Elizabeth, indeed, did change towards Mary at this period. Up to the time of the Lennox marriage Elizabeth had regarded Mary with suspicion and irritation and had interfered, in an exasperating way, with her matrimonial schemes. In doing this she had followed the dictates of policy; England's advantage lay with the Lords who had signed the Treaty of Edinburgh that Mary would not ratify, and Elizabeth's usual game of shuttlecock had kept the Scottish affairs in some sort of balanced state. But when Mary, with a tarnished reputation, found herself in a difficult and unhappy position, with half her nobility in rebellion, Elizabeth did not take sides against her and help spread tales about her, but acted with that dignity and grandeur that gilded so many of the actions of this woman of genius.

From the date of the Rizzio murder to the flight across the Solway, Elizabeth behaved as a true counsellor and friend to Mary.

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The Queen of Scotland had to prepare herself for the birth of her child. She showed herself, for once, anxious to keep up appearances. She went through a form of reconciliation with Moray; she may indeed have been thankful to have this strong, able man by her side at such a crisis, whatever she suspected of his secret disloyalty. She appeared to be, on the surface at least, friendly with her husband. She was anxious for the countenance of her husband and brother, so that no stigma might attach to the child.

Earl Bothwell was, however, "all in all" with the Court, and Mary's reputation was really ruined, nor was it ever to recover its unblemished purity, but she endeavoured to put some gloss upon her strange position. Lennox afterwards declared that his son had told him about his wife, "a paragon and the Queen", that a few weeks before the birth of the child she had urged him in coarse terms to take a mistress, and had suggested that he should seduce the Earl of Moray's wife, but neither Darnley nor Lennox is to be believed, though the ugly anecdote may have some truth in it; it seems typical of Mary's bitter recklessness at this perilous time of her fortunes.

On the other hand the French Ambassador said when asked how Mary and her husband were getting on together, that he thought suspicion existed between them and that they did not trust each other, though they behaved as husband and wife and were more together, and that the Queen had been more affectionate to her husband.

By this time Mary, who was full of melancholy foreboding and did not believe she would survive her confinement, made her Will. In this she left several handsome presents to her husband, including the enamelled ring of the ominous red hue set with the diamond, with which he had married her.

Against the entry she wrote, and much may lie behind the words : "It was in this that I was married, I leave it to the King who gave it to me."

She also left a ruby set as a tortoise to Giuseppe, the eighteen-year-old brother of David Rizzio, whom she had made her private secretary in his stead. This had been a gift from David to the Queen. She had given his dangerous post to the murdered man's brother as early as April 29th. In the letter of the Spanish Ambassador that notes this, he says : "The secretary David was buried in a cemetery and the Queen had him disinterred and placed in a fair tomb inside the Church whereat many are offended."

Lennox says Darnley had uttered words of remorse when passing the newly made grave of Rizzio in the burial place at Holyrood. Mary had declared it should "go very hard with her but a fatter than Rizzio should lie near him ere one twelve month was at an end ". This would mean that the murdered man was buried beside the royal Kings of Scotland. Would Mary do this? Yet, as he was a Romanist, where else could she have buried him?

Among these careful and touching bequests of personal objects in this Will of Mary's were gifts to Bothwell, Huntly, the Earl and Countess of Lennox, the four Maries, the Cardinal of Lorraine, and other French relations.

When the time for the birth of her child approached she retired into Edinburgh Castle for safety, and there on June 9th, between ten and eleven in the morning she was delivered of the prince who was to be the first Stewart King of England.

Mary evidently feared for the future of the child. She realized it would seem that her earnest and diligent efforts to keep up an appearance had been rather belated, though she could

scarcely have known that as early as the January of that year, Randolph had told Leicester: "Woe indeed to you when David's son shall be a King of England." It was the grandson of the Lord Ruthven who had been present at the murder of Rizzio who flung in the young King's face the taunt, at the time of the " Gowrie Conspiracy ", when he said, " Come down thou son of Signor David."

In the " Memoirs " of Lord Herries, who was a warm supporter of the Queen, is the following account of her interview with her husband, who came to see her at two o'clock in the afternoon on the day of her delivery. This story seems very pat and ready, and Herries credits Mary with a good deal of strength for one in her condition. Her anxiety for her child, however, may have nerved her to this effort.

" ' My lord,' she said, ' God has given you and me a son begotten by none but you,' at which words the King blushed and kissed the child. Then she took the infant in her arms and uncovering his face, said: ' My lord, here I protest in God as I shall answer to Him on the great Day of Judgment, it is your son and no other man's son, and I am desirous that all here, both ladies and others should bear witness, that he is so much your own son that I fear it will be the worse for him hereafter.' Then she spoke to Sir William Stanley: ' This,' said she, ' is the son whom I hope shall first unite the two kingdoms of Scotland and England.'

" Sir William answered: ' Why, madam? Shall he proceed before your Majesty and his father? '

" ' It is because his father has broken with me.'

" With some reason the King asked: ' Sweet madam, is this the promise that you made to forgive and forget all? '

" The Queen answered: ' I have forgiven all, but will never forget. If Fawinside (Andrew Carr of Fawinside) had shot, what would become of him and me both, or what estate would you have been in? God only knows, but we may suspect.'

" ' Madam,' answered the King, ' these things are all past.'

" ' Then,' saith the Queen, ' let them go.'

If one may believe this account, Mary was cherishing considerable, scarcely concealed rancour against her husband. That she should have been forced to make this public declaration of the legitimacy of her child, shows how deeply her honour had been smirched, and how painfully her name had been draggled in the dirt. She must have been, surely, desperate, and almost at bay,

to take such extreme measures. Henry Stewart, who had, before the Rizzio murder, denied paternity of the child and done his best to jeopardize his life, now wrote in formal terms to the Cardinal of Lorraine announcing the birth, and not remotely hinting at any scandal between himself and Mary. James Melville took the news of the birth of the Scottish heir to Elizabeth, who was dancing at Greenwich. Her merriment was soon cast aside when she heard the news. A womanly and royal rage moved Elizabeth to exclaim: "The Queen of Scots is lighter of a fair son and I am but a barren stock!"

The next day, however, she had recovered her dignity and gave Melville a very pleasant reception, even welcoming him with the first steps of a merry *volte* or French dance. Melville told her with great ingenuousness that Mary had suffered considerably in her confinement. "Her son was dear bought with peril of her life, she was so sore handled in the meantime that she wished she had never married. . . . This I said to give the English Queen a little scare of marrying."

Elizabeth was not, however, affected, nor could she be brought round to name the little Prince the second heir to the English Crown. When this point was touched on she declared that she was about to marry the Archduke Charles. She agreed, however, to be "gossip" or godmother to the little Prince and she forbore to mention her latest grievance against the Queen of Scots, namely the shelter that Shane O'Neil, the Earl of Tyrone, the most dangerous of the Irish rebels, was receiving in Scotland. But she took occasion when writing to congratulate Mary on the birth of her son, to complain not only of this but of the English rebels such as Christopher Rokesey, who were receiving favour in Scotland.

It was Sir Henry Killigrew who brought the official warning and the secret complaint to Edinburgh. He had his notes to make on the affairs, domestic and politic, of the young Queen of Scots who should, by the birth of her son, have been at the height of her triumph.

"Bothwell was on the borders yet it is thought and said that his credit with the Queen is more than all the rest together. The Queen's husband lies also in the Castle, his father is in the town. Methinks that for all the young Prince there is small accounts made of them" (i.e., the Lennox faction).

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Mary was in a strange and perilous position; she seems herself

scarcely to have known what to do. She was eager for Elizabeth's friendship, she was eager for the foreign aid that would shake her free of Elizabeth. Moray, hitherto her best adviser, was hostile; Lethington, the clever secretary whose counsels were so to her mind, was also estranged; exceeding bitterness was between Mary and her young husband. It was not a year and a half since she had made her headlong, secret marriage, and her passionate caprice had turned into as passionate a loathing. Half her nobles were in rebellion, there were few whom she could really trust. And there was Earl Bothwell whose "credit with her was more than all together," a man who had always attracted her, who had given singular service to both her mother and herself, one of a like temperament to her own, ardent, reckless, accomplished, personally fascinating, full of buoyant high spirits and zest of life.

It is impossible to know Mary's mind at this juncture, but it may be safe to assume, from what we can logically deduce from the sequence of events and the reports of contemporaries, that the Queen had already decided to be rid of her husband, to be revenged on the Lords, and to put her future destiny into the hands of Earl Bothwell.

Either such was her resolve or she was drifting on fickle opportunity, from day to day, swayed by every circumstance and every passion that involved her tormented spirit.

Her ambition flared with the birth of the son who was, in the upshot, to render all ambition futile for her, since he was so soon to take her place. She had grandiose dreams of an upheaval that would leave her mistress of the double throne, she longed after Spanish help, Papal money, French armies.

Yet Elizabeth's envoy saw her a pallid, weak creature who seemed incapable of anything save inspiring pity.

Mary received Killigrew in her chamber at Edinburgh Castle when the little Prince was five days old. She had not the strength, however, to do more than give him a formal welcome. He was allowed to see the Prince "sucking of his nourishment, and afterwards saw him as good as naked, I mean his head, feet and hands, all to my judgment well proportioned and like to prove a goodly Prince. Her Majesty was so bold immediately after delivery that she has not yet recovered, the few words she spoke were faintly with a hollow cough."

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An unfortunate little incident damaged Mary's credit with
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Elizabeth at this time when the Scotch Queen had such need of England's friendship.

Christopher Rokesey, before mentioned, had turned traitor and spy at the instigation of Cecil (or had always been this) and in a long letter written to that statesman had given an account of the interviews that he had had with the Scotch Queen when Mary had been imprudent enough to tell this man without any credentials and whom she might have guessed was one of Cecil's agents, all her hopes for the succession to the English Crown, even naming the nobles whom she intended to win over, such as the Duke of Norfolk, the Earls of Derby, Shrewsbury, Northumberland, Westmoreland, and Cumberland.

She had "the better hope of these because she thought them all to be of the old religion which she meant to restore again with all expedition and thereby win the hearts of the common people. Besides this she practised to have two of the worshipful magistrates of every shire of England and such as were of her religion to be made her friends. . . . She sought of me to know the names of such as would meet that purpose."

This must have been ugly reading for both Cecil and Elizabeth. According to Rokesey's highly-coloured account, Mary went on to say, with desperate imprudence, that she meant "to cause war to be stirred in Ireland whereby England might be kept occupied". Then she would have everything in readiness and "herself and her army to enter England, and the day that she should enter her title would be read and she proclaimed Queen, and certain people of every shire would repair unto her for her better admittance to take possession of her Crown".

For the better furnishing of this purpose she had before travelled with Spain, with France, "and with the Pope for aid and had received fair promises of some money from the Pope and more looked for".

Then follows a passage that must have moved Elizabeth to considerable rage.

"I would fain do for the best," said she, "for the sooth-sayers to tell us that the Queen of England shall not live this year." Rokesey added that Lord Bothwell was in more secret favour with her than any other.

It is a strange picture, that of the Queen "seated on a chest" in Holyrood, gossiping over such dangerous matters with a chance English rebel, but the matters that Rokesey mentions are those that are known to have been near Mary's heart, and

it is likely enough that she talked wildly and without forethought. These revelations increased the deep distrust that Elizabeth always felt of this difficult neighbour. It is the more to her credit that she behaved, as she undoubtedly did behave, generously towards the unhappy Mary.

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When Mary recovered from her confinement she faced her complex problems with an outbreak of those high animal spirits that so often offended her enemies and outraged the Puritans of Scotland. Though she could be, on occasion, so resourceful in guile and in intrigue, there is something about her gaiety that seems to have been spontaneous, to have come untutored from an impulsive heart.

While Bedford was writing to England that Bothwell "carried all the credit" in the Court, the most hated man among the noblemen in Scotland, "his insolence is such that David was never more abhorred than he is now", Mary had perversely taken for her counsellor Moray, her half-brother. Whatever might have been her growing passion for that reckless gentleman the Border Earl, and however much she may have admired his bold and daring exploits and the clever escape from Holyrood after the murder of the Italian, yet at this crisis she turned in serious matters to Moray, the strongest, wisest man who ever guided her councils.

So far was Moray in her secrets she even confided to him that money was coming from the Pope. The King, his father Lennox, and all their faction, fell daily into a deeper disesteem. But Henry Stewart's jealousy seems to have settled more on Moray than on Bothwell. He must have known that his treachery in the matter of the Rizzio murder had made him many enemies, but he seems to have realized that the most powerful of these was Moray who had again authority over, and the confidence of, the Queen.

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Soon after the birth of the Prince, who was confided to Lord Erskine, lately made Earl of Mar, Governor of Edinburgh Castle, and one of the most respectable of Mary's nobles, the Queen indulged one of those caprices which however innocent in themselves did nothing to help her reputation.

She left the Castle secretly "before her month was up", as Lennox declared, and went upon a visit to Alloa, the seat of the Earl of Mar. She sailed up the Firth from Leith in a boat

manned by some of Bothwell's followers, or "pirates" as her enemies unfairly named them (the noble Earl was, as far as can be ascertained, absent). At Alloa, as Mar's guest, Mary indulged in those amusements, dancing and masques, games and sports so hateful to the Puritans. This was the last flash of her triumph, the last of her moments of ease and freedom. No doubt she then felt, despite the murder of her favourite and the growing estrangement of the husband whom she had begun to loathe, secure as to the future, rapturous in a new passion.

She was the mother of "a fair Prince", Elizabeth was ill, perhaps dying, she had heard encouraging reports as to the attitude of the Roman Catholics in England towards her, she had been reassured as to the friendliness of the foreign Roman Catholic powers. When she had ridden to Dumfries and to Dunbar with her banners raised, the country had rallied round her. She believed that she had won Moray, a staunch, capable man, to her service again. She trusted in the prowess and loyalty of Bothwell.

The King, jealous, offended, sullen, came after his wife, going on horseback by way of Stirling, but she received him so coldly that his stay was of a few hours only. This time, the one apparent friend of Henry Stewart was Earl Bothwell, they made common cause of their hatred of the dominant Moray; Bothwell hoped, perhaps to use the King as the Lords had used him, and the Queen's husband was catching at straws.

Soon after the Queen returned to Edinburgh (August 8th) her husband, no longer able to contain his rage against her brother, threatened Mary that he would murder Moray as he had murdered Rizzio. The Queen informed her brother of these menaces, pressure was brought upon the King to apologize for his rash words; he tried to excuse himself by saying that reports were made to him "that Moray was not his friend, but that he repented".

This was an abject humiliation for the King; the death of Rizzio began to be avenged.

Husband and wife then separated, going on different hunting trips; neither could have had much hope of a reconciliation, and the King, when he heard the horn, must have felt "I am the prey they seek".

Moray used his influence for the restoration of Lethington, whose part in the Rizzio murder had been so carefully concealed, into the Queen's graces; she not only received the secretary into

her own favour, but forced Bothwell to meet him on civil terms. The unhappy King must have seen, with deep foreboding, the restoration of Lethington to Mary's councils, and the prospect of the return of other conspirators whom he had so utterly betrayed.

It is in the September of this year, 1566, that Mary's enemies place the beginning of her intrigue with Bothwell. Evidence for this rests on George Buchanan and on Lord Lennox, the father of Darnley, both of them untrustworthy and biased against the Queen, but it may be that there is some truth in their allegations, which are certainly supported by the characters of Bothwell and Mary, and subsequent events.

Lord Bothwell had been seven months married to the learned Jane Gordon, the bride chosen for him by the Queen herself when she was endeavouring to unite Bothwell with Huntly in a bond of loyalty to herself; some say that Lady Bothwell had grown to love her attractive husband, others that she always preferred Ogilvy of Boyne, who became her third husband.

Buchanan's story is in substance this: The Queen used to sit in her Exchequer House to understand her Revenues and to appoint what should be in the keeping of her house and the young Prince. The garden of this house communicated with the residence of one David Chalmers, a jackal of Lord Bothwell. By this means, and with the help of stout Lady Reres, herself a discarded wanton of the Earl's, the lovers used to meet.

It seems strange that they could have carried on this intimate intrigue without it coming to the knowledge of spies or being discovered by the King who, though he had been so quick to display intense jealousy in Rizzio's case, does not appear to have suspected Bothwell; on the other hand, the outraged husband may have felt helpless, and been turning over a more subtle revenge.

There is no mention in the dispatches of Bedford or Randolph of any gossip about Mary and the Earl at this period; we hear that Bothwell was high in favour, no more.

On the 31st of August, Mary, from Stirling, issued a Proclamation which, under the circumstances, was of sinister meaning. In it she commanded the magistrates of Edinburgh "to search out and punish without exception those who committed

adultery, fornication, open harlotry, and other such lusts of the flesh".

What was the reason of this, at such a time—was Moray's stern hand in it?

David Chalmers, who was supposed to have been the go-between of Bothwell and Mary (Bothwell at that time was staying in the house of Chalmers with Lady Bothwell) was by the Earl's means afterwards made a Lord of State, "not from any learning or any other good quality that appeared in him, but because he had served Bothwell in his naughty practices and pleasures. He was a great deal of service to the Queen and Bothwell in the time before the King's murder when the Queen lay at the Exchequer House in the Cow's Gate. Then he was made Common Clerk of Edinburgh."

This is taken from some notes sent from the Continent for Cecil's benefit during Mary's captivity, and in some ways confirms the Lennox and Buchanan's tales.

By October, the trouble between Mary and her husband was so open that her counsellors thought fit to send an elaborate account to Catherine de' Medici of the impossible behaviour of the King.

They would, they declare in this very able statement, drafted perhaps by Moray or Maitland, have hushed up the scandal, but "seeing that he himself is the very first person who by his deportment will lead discovery to the world, we can do no less, both to satisfy the office we bear and the duty we owe to the Queen, than to testify the things that we have both seen and heard, all those who are allied to Her Majesty, especially to the King your son and Your Majesty's self, whom we look upon to be the principal support of our Sovereign and our Crown".

After this complimentary opening the Lords go on to relate an incident which had taken place, ten or twelve days ago when the Queen, at the request of the Scottish councillors, had come to Edinburgh. The King, though urged to do so, had refused to accompany her and remained at Stirling with his father, Lennox, who soon after wrote from Glasgow that the project of his son was to retire out of the kingdom beyond the sea and that for this purpose he had a ship lying ready. Was this the Lennox vengeance for the open amour with Bothwell?

Mary, in what seems like a panic, instantly communicated this letter to the Lords of her council. Great surprise was affected by everyone that the King should moot such a design, but all

must have been aware, and the Queen first of any, that not only was her husband's situation one of complete misery and degradation, but that he was also in considerable peril as a result of his betrayal of the Rizzio conspirators, and it was indeed little wonder that he wished to escape from the kingdom while he was yet able to do so with a whole skin and some shred of credit. Everyone on the surface, however, pretended to be very shocked and surprised; their amazement was increased when the King, that same evening, came to Edinburgh. He would not enter the palace because there were three or four Lords at that time present with the Queen. We are not told who the three or four Lords were, but the King may have feared assassination. The nobles, however, pretended to take his behaviour as an insult, "since they were three of the greatest Lords in the Kingdom, and those Kings who by their own birth were Sovereigns of the Realm had never acted in that manner towards the nobility".

The Queen, doubtless acting a predesigned part, received this behaviour quietly and "condescended so far as to go and meet the King without the palace and conducted him to her own apartment where he remained all night". Evidently she was trying the blandishments which had been so successful on the night of the murder of Rizzio. Her object was to find out the cause of the King's sudden resolution of leaving the country, but she could not move him in this direction, and in the morning he spoke of his intention of returning to Stirling.

The Lords, accompanied by M. du Croc (often named Crocus), the old and wise French Ambassador, then repaired to the Queen's apartment and did all they could to satisfy and even flatter the King and to find out from him why he had resolved to leave Scotland—"so beautiful a Queen and so noble a realm" as they put it—words which must have sounded ironical in the ears of the distracted boy for he enjoyed neither the Queen nor the realm. With even more distaste must he have heard the unctuous flattery, "he had all the reason in the world to thank God for giving him so wise and virtuous a person as the Queen showed herself in all her actions".

Mary then added her beguiling arts to these arguments. She had not been able to move him, she said, when they were in private together, but he might at least be pleased to declare himself before these Lords where she had offended him.

Henry Stewart, however, was not to be seduced; he took his leave and went his way. He soon after, however, sent a letter

to Mary in which he put forward two grounds of complaint which were obvious disguises for his real feelings.

His first grievance was, he declared, that Mary no longer trusted him with as much authority nor was at such pains to advance him and make him to be honoured in the nation as she did at first. The other point was "that nobody attends him, the nobility deserts his company".

To these charges Mary, of course, was able to retort readily that neither of them could be imputed to her fault. She referred to the Rizzio murder and pointed out her goodness in forgiving him his obvious part in this. Both the Queen and her Council evidently took the situation to be of great gravity, hence this letter to Catherine de' Medici.

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The King's behaviour on this occasion is perfectly accountable and even reasonable if we accept the tale of Mary's liaison with Bothwell. In this case he would have known of it, or at least suspected it, and he would have given up all hopes of any affection or respect from his wife, while he would have feared not only the vengeance of the Lords whom he had betrayed, but the ambition of Bothwell who might easily stick a dagger in him in order to take his place. He may have been, an inexperienced boy, not yet one-and-twenty as he was, so baffled, angered, shamed, and exasperated by Mary's behaviour, that he could in his wretchedness and misery see no way out of the tangle, save by flight from the country, which course would not only ensure his own safety but leave Mary unprotected by his presence or his name to face the consequences of her love affair with Bothwell. In this way he would gain revenge as well as safety.

Such an interpretation of the story would also explain Mary's panic and the wit and courage she used on this, as on many another crisis of her life, to ensure her safety by instantly calling in the help of the Lords and trying to put her case before Europe and before her French relations with adroit and eager haste; Moray would help her, for the sake of the family honour.

So satisfying logically and psychologically does this interpretation appear that it seems almost irresistible. Mary had twice escaped disaster in an open scandal that might have cost her her Crown—once in the heedless passion for Henry Stewart himself, once in the reckless favouritism of David Rizzio. She could not afford to affront public opinion a third time. Her husband had proved himself from the first difficult to manage;

she had, it is true, without much effort induced him to betray his accomplices once, but on this last occasion she had not been able to move his sullen mood. If, then, she had already indulged that headstrong passion for Bothwell which she was afterwards to make so public she must have been in an extreme terror when her husband first mooted the project of his withdrawal from Scotland. She had thrown some slur on the birth of her first child. If she were to have another child and her husband were to be abroad after a complete repudiation of her as his wife, honour and credit would be lost and for ever to the Queen.

If such was Mary's position, if this was the dreadful circumstance in which she found herself, her entire attitude from this October to the following February is perfectly feasible, comprehensible, and clear, and all obscurities are removed. Clear also is the attitude of the miserable young King, outraged, affronted, afraid of murder, yet succumbing finally to the blandishments of a woman who in terror of her life and honour was exercising all her arts to seduce him.

On the other hand, if Mary were innocent and had no more to reproach herself with than light-hearted indiscretion, then Henry Stewart was a boor and a fool, acting in a way such as only can be accounted for by a craven fear for his own skin.

Not only is this solution of the mystery more unlikely from every point of view and less corroborated by facts, but it makes what is to follow exasperatingly obscure and difficult. The letter that the French Ambassador, Du Croc, sent to Archbishop Beaton, Mary's Ambassador in Paris at the same period, supports the view of Mary's guilt, her panic, and her husband's resolution to shame her by withdrawing from Scotland.

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Du Croc begins by saying the Queen was in good health; it must have been but a transient glow of high spirits. Mary was never more to be in good health for the rest of her life. She was never a strong woman and had some chronic complaints, it is impossible to find out now what they were—there was weakness, fainting, pains in the side, and recurrent fevers. If she had been "other than she was", and her beauty marred and blown upon soon after the beginning of her love affair with Henry Stewart she could scarcely have been either beautiful or blooming by now. There is every reason to believe that she aged rapidly, that all freshness and glow would have gone from her

by the time of the birth of her child; but vivacity, grace, seductive charm would remain.

Du Croc adds that when the Queen had returned to Edinburgh "the King however abode at Stirling, and he told me there that he had a mind to go beyond the seas in a sort of desperation". This sentence does not bring up the picture of a drunken young fool sunk in sloth, vice and wilful stupidity, but rather that of a man who is cornered and brought to extreme expedients.

Du Croc goes on to relate Mary's attempt to bring her husband round and the meeting of the Council, which is told in their letter to Catherine de' Medici. Du Croc adds details which the Lords do not give. He says that Mary challenged Darnley, "for God's sake" to give her the reason for his discontent with her. Du Croc told him that his departure must certainly affect either his own or the Queen's honour, and the young man broke a sullen silence by saying, according to Du Croc, that he had no ground at all for his decision. He then left the Chamber of Presidents, saying to the Queen: "Adieu, madame, you shall not see my face for a long space." He then said to the Lords in general, "Gentlemen, adieu!" "He has not embarked," adds Du Croc, "but we receive advertisements from day to day that he still holds on his resolution, and keeps a ship in readiness.

"It is in vain to imagine that he should be able to raise any disturbance for there is not one person in all the kingdom from the highest to the lowest that regards him any further than is agreeable to the Queen."

Then Du Croc adds a famous sentence that under the circumstances is indeed baffling: "And I never saw Her Majesty so much beloved, esteemed and honoured, nor so great a harmony among all her subjects than present is by her wise conduct, for I cannot perceive the smallest difference or division."

In this month Mary was at Jedburgh, at the foot of the Cheviots, holding a Border session. While she was there she learnt that Bothwell had been severely wounded in a Border affray in Liddesdale where he had been shot through the thigh by one of the leaders of the robbers, John Elliot of the Park.

Bothwell was thrown into a cart for dead and taken to his Castle of Hermitage, where he lay seriously ill with three wounds.

Mary at Jedburgh heard this news and rode to the wounded Earl's Castle. The excuse for her visit was that she wished to learn from him the state of affairs in these districts of which the said Lord was the hereditary Governor.

This is the explanation given by Claude Nau in his "History of Mary Stewart" where he writes as Mary's mouthpiece.

Buchanan, of course, has another version of this famous ride, when Mary hurried fifty or sixty miles in one day over the rough country, for she returned to Jedburgh the same evening. He declared that the impatient and reckless woman was hurrying to the bedside of her possibly dying lover. Buchanan's bad faith is here manifest, for it was not till eight days after Bothwell's wounding that she rode to Hermitage Castle, a mighty fortalice, and she was accompanied by several of the Lords, including Moray. At the same time it seems unlikely that Mary, herself far from well and troubled with her "old complaint" a pain in the side, should have undertaken this troublesome travelling on a mere matter of business. Surely someone else could have been sent to learn from the wounded chief what the Queen wanted to know about the state of the Border?

Local legend keeps the episode alive in the "Queen's Myre," a morass where the Queen's white horse is fabled to have sunk as she rushed to her lover's side.

Mary had no sooner returned to Jedburgh than she was seized by the most alarming illness of her life—a crisis no doubt partly hysterical and brought on by emotion, agitation, and over fatigue.

A letter to Archbishop Beaton in Paris, signed by Huntly, Atholl, James Stewart, Moray, and William Maitland of Lethington sent from Jedburgh, October 23rd, tells the Archbishop to warn Catherine de' Medici of the great danger of Mary's decease. Maitland, in a further letter, says that "Her Majesty was very sorely handled and looked herself for nothing but death". The adroit and shrewd statesman put his fingers on the spot when he wrote: "The occasion of the Queen's sickness as far as I understand, is caused by thought (worry) and displeasure, and I trow, by what I could wring further of her own declaration to me, the root is the King."

Then Maitland adds the words which in the light of afar events seem to have a sinister meaning: "It is heartbreaking for her to think that he should be her husband, and how to be free of him she sees outgait".

How to be rid of him with honour and safety to herself, Maitland might have added, for it was easy enough for Mary to be rid of Darnley by urging or goading him to remain resolute to his desire to leave the country. She could, also, have contrived a divorce, for a dispensation for the marriage had not arrived until after it had taken place. But it appeared obvious that this did not suit the Queen. She was reduced to an illness of fear and terror because she wanted to be rid of her husband and she could see no manner of doing so without blasting her own reputation.

It indeed looks as if she already knew herself so deeply involved with Bothwell that nothing could save her but the violent removal of the husband, who refused to be complacent.

The King showed no concern in his wife's illness. "The King is at Glasgow," wrote M. Du Croc to Archbishop Beaton, "and has never come here. He has been informed by someone and has had time enough to come if he wished."

On the night of the 21st October, the Queen was believed to be dead; she lay so long in a swoon and her body was so cold, that Moray began to lay hands "on the most precious articles", according to Nau, "such as her silver plate and rings". The mourning dresses were ordered and arrangements made for the funeral, but Mary seems to have had but a violent hysterical seizure; her feet and knees were cold, she failed in her sight, and became insensible. She was brought out of this by a massage which lasted four hours, "vehement torment", the Bishop Lesley writing to Archbishop Beaton, calls it, which finally brought Mary to some signs of life. She was, however, reduced to extreme weakness, both from the pain of massaging which was performed in a violent fashion "by extreme rubbing and drawing and other cures", from continuous vomiting, and laxatives. She was in a state of collapse, being unable to swallow the sacred wafer which was administered to her.

If Mary had died in this illness she would have been spared many years of suffering, have left a pleasanter name behind her and spared Europe much trouble.

When she thought she was about to die she took a stately and honourable leave of all about her, expressing laudable and Godly sentiments both as to religion, the future of the realm, and her son. She sent specially for the French Ambassador, to declare her constant mind to die in the Catholic religion.

When the Queen had been ill four days, Lord Bothwell was

brought, still dangerously ill from his wounds, on a litter, into Jedburgh. A few days after this the King arrived.

Mary's sudden and violent illness was, of course, attributed to poison, but modern medical opinion is that the Queen suffered from "an attack of haematemesis, infusion of blood into the stomach presenting hysterical complications, the whole induced by over-exertion and vexation".

The King was received by his wife in her sick chamber and no one knows what passed between them. He left immediately and returned to Glasgow, the stronghold of the Lennox faction, where he was not only among his own retainers, where he received some respect and honour, but was safe. He must have been, and every act of his shows that he was, in continual fear of his life.

In another week Mary, with that extraordinary resilience possessed by so many delicate and emotional women, was again on horseback and continued her inspection of the Border. Bothwell, who seems also to have quickly recovered from his three dangerous wounds, was with her, as well as her brother, Huntly, Lethington, and a troop of nearly a thousand horse.

When she stopped at Kelso, Buchanan, whose accounts must always be accepted with extreme reserve, says that she received a letter from her husband when in the company of her brother, Huntly, and Lethington, and cast one piteous look, and began "miserably to torment herself as if she would incontinently have fallen down again into her former sickness. She plainly and expressly pretended that unless she might by some means or other be despatched of the King she would never have any good day, and if by no other way she would attain it; rather than she would abide to live in such sorrow, she would slay herself."

It seems reasonable to suppose that the King's letter contained another threat of his withdrawal abroad, and Mary, unnerved by her recent illness as she must have been, made a desperate and hysterical appeal to the three men whom she considered her friends and champions. Afterward Mary, as though in a deep grief and sorrow, continued to ride the Border in the autumn weather.

She crossed into England and was received at Berwick with great honour. From Dunbar she dictated a letter to Queen Elizabeth's Council on the old vexatious subject of the English succession for herself and her son, which, she had heard, had

been debated in the English House of Commons. It was a friendly and diplomatic letter; Mary hoped still to gain the goodwill of Elizabeth and come to an amicable settlement about the Throne. She told the English Council that in her late sickness when "she looked not to brook this life twelve hours, that her meaning had been that the especial care of her son should rest upon Elizabeth". She also added, in tactful and involved phrases, that she did regard herself and her child as the next heirs to the English Crown and hoped that the Council would remember it when the matter should next come into deliberation.

Mary stayed her journey at Craigmillar Castle, three miles south of Edinburgh. She waited there for the baptism of her son, which was to take place at Stirling on December 12th, but had been delayed that the Ambassador of Savoy might be present.

While at Craigmillar the Lords Bothwell, Moray, Lethington, Huntly, Argyll, and several others were beginning to conspire together as to how they should bring back the banished nobles, chief of whom were the Earl of Morton and Lord Lindsay, Moray in particular esteeming it a slur on his honour if he could not secure the pardon of his friends. According to the account of this meeting, which was drawn up years afterwards, it was Lethington who came to the point by declaring that the best way to obtain the Earl of Morton's pardon was "to make divorce between Her Grace and the King her husband, who had offended Her Highness so highly in many ways".

The Lords replying, no doubt in obvious irony, that they did not see how this might be done, Lethington said scornfully : "My Lords, say you not thereof, we shall find the means well enough to make her quit of him."

After further consultation the Lords waited on Mary. Lethington was the spokesman, and reminded her of the grievous and intolerable offences that the King had done to Her Grace, which were continuing every day from evil to worse, then suggested to her that if she would pardon the banished nobles, they (the rest of the nobility) should find means to make divorce between Her Highness and the King her husband.

Lethington used several arguments and persuasions, surely quite unnecessary, on these lines. Mary was eagerly willing to listen. She kept up appearances and said that she had only two conditions to make : That the divorce should be lawful, and that it might not prejudice her son,

It was Bothwell who answered that "the divorcement might be made without prejudice in any way of my lord the Prince".

The suggestion was then made that after the divorce the King should retire to a distant part of the realm or leave the country.

The Queen thereupon said that it might be better if he retired into France.

Lethington, as if tired of all these pretences, said, with what seems cynicism, that the Queen might leave the matter to the principal members of her nobility and Council.

"They will find a way," he added, "that Your Majesty shall be quit of him without prejudice to your son." Lethington also said that Moray, "though he be little less scrupulous for a Protestant than Your Grace is for a Papist, I am assured he will look through his fingers thereto and will behold our doings, saying nothing of the same."

Mary, preserving her dignity and allowing nothing of her true mind to be seen, dismissed her advisers and champions by saying: "I will that you do nothing by which any spot may be laid to my honour or conscience."

As this account was not written until some years after the event, it is not perhaps entirely reliable, though some such association was made and some such scene took place at Craigmillar.

It is curious to note in connection with this coming together of Maitland and Bothwell that a bitter and sordid personal dispute between them relating to the estates of a former nunnery in Haddington, which Bothwell claimed and Maitland had succeeded in getting possession of, was so violent by 1566 that it was rumoured that Bothwell was in danger of poisoning from his own servants paid by Maitland.

Buchanan declares that it was Mary herself who suggested a divorce from her husband. This may well have been. The important point is that at Craigmillar in this period the question of the divorce was first mooted.

Mary seems to have lost the volatile high spirits that made her an object of comment that summer when the wildest stories had been current about her and it was even said that she had been seen dancing round the Market Cross in male attire. There was no more joyous dancing, nor carefree masques, nor gay games and sports for the Queen.

At Craigmillar, according to Du Croc, she was in the hands of her physicians, " and I do assure you is not at all well. And I do believe the principal part of her disease consists in a deep grief and sorrow, nor does it seem possible to make her forget the same. Still she repeats the words, ' I could wish to be dead.' You know very well the injury Her Majesty has received is very great and she can never forget it." Du Croc here refers to the murder of Rizzio. Was Mary still tormented by shock, shame, and sorrow for that event, and was she planning a revenge solely for that crime, or was she not involved in fresh troubles?

Du Croc endeavoured to bring round the King, who was not to be moved out of his sullenness and threatened immediately to withdraw from Scotland, not even waiting for the baptism of his son.

" I speak my mind freely," adds the Frenchman, " but I do not expect on several accounts, any good understanding between them, unless God especially put His hand to it. I shall only name two reasons against it: The first is that the King will never humble himself as he ought, the other that the Queen cannot see him speak to any nobleman but presently she suspects some plot among them."

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At Christmas time in Stirling Castle Mary threw off her grief and sickness sufficiently to play with charming grace the hostess in the last public pageantry in which she was ever to take part, save only the ceremony in which she was the principal figure on the last day of her life.

Elizabeth had sent the puritanical Earl of Bedford with a handsome present, a font of heavy gold inset with jewels, of great worth and excellent workmanship weighing three hundred and thirty-three ounces—a splendid gift from a poverty stricken Queen who had had lately to face her Parliament with empty coffers.

The Countess of Argyll, Mary's half-sister, was Elizabeth's proxy as godmother, no English lady being able to travel so far in the winter, the French King and the Duke of Savoy were godfathers.

In her letter of instruction to the Earl of Bedford, Queen Elizabeth, with her natural, attractive humour, gave him a pleasant jest which he might use when presenting the font.
" You may say pleasantly that it was made as soon as we heard

of the Queen's Prince's birth, and then it was big enough for him, but now he being grown it is too small for him. However, it may be better used for the next child, provided it be christened before it outgrow the font."

The festival was brilliant and Mary exerted herself to entertain her splendid guests. There was a dark background, however, to the formal rejoicings. The King had not left the country as he had threatened, but remained shut up in his apartments during the feasting and pageantry. One reason given was that he was afraid Elizabeth's envoys had been instructed not to allow him royal honours. His despair and torment of mind is shown in the fact that he sent three times to the French Ambassador, bidding him come to him in his solitary room. Du Croc replied with what seems unnecessary insolence, "that I would have no conference with him, and it would not be very proper for him to come to my apartment because there was such a crowd of company there, so he ought to be aware of the two passages to it, that if he should enter by the one I should feel myself compelled to go out at the other". The Frenchman adds that "his bad deportment is incurable, nor can there be any good expected from him for several reasons which I might tell you were I present with you".

This is one side of the story, but if only half that is alleged against Mary is true, her bad deportment was also incurable, nor could she have expected any good behaviour from her wretched young husband. The Lennox MS. gives another picture of the King ignored, slighted, almost cringing for a kind or respectful word.

The King had not always been rebuked by France. In this winter of 1566, a deputation from Charles IX, headed by the Sieur de Rambouillet, arrived at Holyrood with the Order of St. Michael for the Queen's husband, and Henry Stewart displayed this new gaud, a collar of golden cockleshells instituted by Louis XI, at a series of banquets and entertainments in honour of the Frenchmen, where Mary and her ladies appeared in male attire.

Du Croc, however, was a champion of Mary. He says: "She behaved amply well at the time of the baptism and showed so much earnestness to entertain all the good company in the best manner that in the meantime she forgot all her indispositions." Secretly, however, he found her pensive and melancholy. When she had sent for him once he found her "laid on

her bed and weeping sore". She was ill again and complained of a pain in her side and had hurt herself riding.

"I am much grieved," wrote Du Croc, compassionately, "for the many troubles and vexations that she meets with."

The religious question also helped to strike a discordant note in the baptismal rejoicings. Bedford was too extreme a Puritan to enter the Chapel where the Roman Catholic ceremony was held. He bribed the Countess of Argyll to go in instead of himself, and she afterwards had to do penance for attending a baptism performed in Papist manner.

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For all her graciousness, charm and sophistication, for all her eagerness to keep up appearances, Mary did one tactless thing during these hollow ceremonies at Stirling. She appointed Earl Bothwell, though a known Protestant, to receive the Ambassadors and take all charge of the ceremony, "the same scarcely liked with the rest of the nobility", wrote Sir John Foster to Cecil. Viewing Mary's conduct in the best possible light, it must be admitted that she here showed a strange and dangerous lack of common prudence; when her own husband, a Roman Catholic, refused to countenance the christening of their son, she put forward, practically in his place, a Protestant, and a man whom she had already distinguished by too many favours.

Much has also been made of the gifts of gold-edged stuff, given by Mary to Bothwell on this occasion, but it appears, according to the inventories kept by Servais de Condé, her Keeper of the Wardrobe, that she made similar presents to many nobles, including Huntly, Maitland, Moray, and Argyll.

There was, after the fashion of the moment, several entertainments and pageants, and one of these caused trouble. It was a masque of satyrs, who ran about wagging their tails. This offended the Englishmen in the train of the Earl of Bedford, for it was supposed to have reference to the old story that Englishmen had tails, "short, like those of stags" as an early Italian writer notes of this peculiarity of the islanders.

A Mr. Hatton who was present was so inflamed that only the Queen's presence prevented him from sticking a dagger in the heart of "the French knave, 'Bastien'" (Sebastien Page, a man of whom more was to be heard), who was supposed to have devised the pageant as an insult to the Englishmen; this

"Bastien" seems to have been a French gentleman, a musician, a master cook and pageant deviser.

Sir James Melville in his "Memoirs" says that this trouble about the tails caused so much noise and rioting that both Bedford and the Queen "turned about their faces" to inquire what the matter was. They were informed then that it was occasioned by the satyrs "so that the Queen and my Lord of Bedford had enough to do to get them at peace".

The Archbishop of St. Andrews christened the young Prince. It was on the 23rd of December that Mary had restored, illegally, it seems, this dignitary's consistorial jurisdiction, which had been for several years abolished. This fact, which seems unimportant in itself, takes on a sinister meaning in the light of after events. If Mary did this innocently, she was, once again, both injudicious and unfortunate. The newly elected Pope Pius V, who had thought, with reason, that Mary was lukewarm in the Faith, sent a letter of congratulation on the christening.

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Mary also celebrated this dismal but brilliant ceremony by signing the pardons of Morton, Ruthven, and Lindsay, and their accomplices in the Rizzio murder. As soon as the King heard of this he, most naturally, left Stirling Castle and retreated to his father's stronghold in Glasgow.

He had no sooner reached this place of safety than he was overcome by a long and dangerous illness, by some attributed to poison with which he had been dosed in Stirling, by others supposed to be a disease due to his licentious, drunken habits, by others, including Bedford and Nau, declared to be smallpox, of which, indeed, there was an epidemic in Glasgow at that time. Very likely distress of mind affected him as it had affected Mary at Jedburgh; of the debauchery of Henry Stewart we have no proof.

Mary, from the date of the christening, received Earl Bothwell into more and more open favour. He was in her company when she went to spend Christmas at Drummond Castle, belonging to Lord Drummond; she left Moray to do the honours to Elizabeth's envoys at St. Andrews.

Gossip and slander was still rife about the young Queen at this period. Her growing infatuation for Bothwell was supposed to be manifest and particularly disgraceful in view of the deadly illness of the King. Bedford, who declares that

"the agreement between the Queen and her husband is nothing amended", adds that Mary had sent her own physician to attend on the King, an attention which, considering the time and the circumstances, he may have viewed with extreme suspicion.

By the middle of January tales of a plot against the King of Scotland were beginning to circulate in London, as is learned from Silva de Guzman's letter to his master, Philip II.

"The displeasure of the Queen of Scotland with her husband is carried so far that she was approached by some who wanted to induce her to allow a plot to be formed against him, but she refused. But she nevertheless shows him no affection."

Guzman adds, in what proves to be a tone of prophecy: "They ought to come to terms, for if they do not look out for themselves they are in a bad way."

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Mary, pursuing her policy of justifying her actions in advance, as it were, and always getting in her own side of the case before her opponents had the time to get in theirs, wrote to the Archbishop Beaton in Paris, putting forward her grievances against her husband: "And for the King our husband, God knows always our part towards him, and his behaviour and thankfulness to us is semblably well-known to God and the world, especially our own indifferent subjects see it, and in our hearts, we doubt not, condemn the same. Always we perceive him occupied and busy enough to have inquisition of our doings, which God willing, shall always be such as none shall have occasion to be offended with them, or to report on us any ways but honourably. Howsoever he, his father and their folk speak, which we know want no good will to make us have ado if their power were equivalent to their minds."

It is impossible to gauge with what degree of sincerity these lines were penned. They may be the proud outcry of injured innocence, or they may be the calculated pose of conscious guilt. This letter from Mary crossed with one from her Ambassador in Paris giving her warning as to some vague plot or design against her, which had reached his ear through the Ambassador of Spain who had desired him to warn Mary. Catherine de' Medici thought there was nothing to be feared, that is, against Mary's safety. Beaton, however, was not completely reassured, and he besought the Queen to cause the Captain of the Guard to have diligence in his office, "for I cannot be out of fear till I hear of your news".

It seems then it was outrage or assassination on Mary's person that the faithful Beaton feared. While these seething passions of hatred, jealousy, revenge, ambition, grief, frustrated and thwarted passions were boiling to an outbreak, a pleasant interlude broke the gloom fast settling round the Court of Holyrood.

Sir William Maitland took as his second wife Mary Fleming. She was the third of the Queen's Maries to be married. Mary Livingstone had married John, Lord Sempill, and Mary Beaton had married Alexander Ogilvy of Boyne. The meek and faithful Mary Seton was now the only one left in attendance on the Queen out of the four little girls who had accompanied her to France.

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We come now to the most dramatic, terrible, and debated period of Mary's life, which it is difficult to relate without giving heed to the controversy for and against the Queen which has swelled so many volumes and will continue to do so while the name of Mary of Scotland is remembered.

It must be again emphasized that an assumption of Mary's guilt, of her committal to Lord Bothwell, of her terrors of the result of her husband's abandonment of her at this particular juncture, would go far to explain all that followed. If she was innocent, then her conduct was reckless, inconsistent, and in some instances, totally incomprehensible.

After she had put her son in the charge of John Erskine, Lord Mar (Moray's maternal uncle, former Prior of Inchmaholm), in Edinburgh Castle, she wrote to her husband, according to the doubtful evidence of Lennox, and proposed visiting him, upon which the King sent the dangerous message that she might do as she wished, "but this much you shall declare unto her, that if Stirling were Jedburgh, Glasgow the Hermitage, and I the Earl of Bothwell as I lie here, then I doubt not that she would quickly be with me undesired".

Whether or no Mary received such a message (and if she did it shows that her husband suspected her with Bothwell and that she was aware of the fact and so strengthens the case against her), Mary set out to visit her husband with the outward appearance of wishing a reconciliation. Bothwell and Huntly escorted her as far as Callendar, near Falkirk. From there they returned to Edinburgh and Mary, either from pity and a tender desire to patch up her ruined marriage, or with

the bitterest hatred and revenge in her heart, proceeded to Glasgow. It must be remembered that she knew that there was a widespread plot against her husband.

Before she had left Edinburgh she had received from Archibald Douglas, one of the hangers-on of the treacherous Morton, information that there was a Band or association amongst the nobles against the King for which they desired the Queen's sanction and safeguard, as they had desired the King's sanction and safeguard before the Rizzio murder. The Queen, however, would have nothing to do with it: "The Queen will hear no speech of that matter."

Archibald Douglas wrote an account of this episode in a letter which he sent to Mary when she was in England.

She did not deny nor repudiate it, nor was she angry with Archibald Douglas, whom she recommended to the French King for a pension, calling him "a useful and honest fellow". It is then proved without doubt, amid all the confusion and intricacies of this affair, that when Mary set out from Edinburgh to Glasgow to visit her sick husband she knew that his enemies were in a Bond against him. She knew what they intended when they plotted the removal of Henry Stewart, she was aware how they must, most of them, hate him for his betrayal of them. But she was prepared to let events take their course; not only did she not warn her husband of what was hatching against him, of that doom which he had for months dreaded, but she deliberately set out to exercise all her arts and blandishments on him in order to remove him from the stronghold of the Lennox, where he was perfectly safe and guarded by his kin, to a house where he would be entirely at the mercy of his enemies.

Whatever part of the dreadful story is obscure this is not. Mary had many reasons for loathing her husband and wishing to be rid of him, either because she had got herself in a desperate situation with Bothwell, or because of the Rizzio murder, or because he had outraged and falsely accused her innocence. Is it not reasonable to suppose that though she would not actively encourage the conspirators, she was quite prepared "to look through her fingers" at whatever they might attempt? And is it not very difficult to suppose that she went to Glasgow in a spirit of loving friendship?

The old Earl of Lennox seems to have viewed the Queen's coming with alarm. He sent out one of his gentlemen, Thomas Crawford of Gordonhill, a man of honour and a

good soldier, according to the standard of the times, to meet her when she approached the town of Glasgow, with an excuse for his not waiting on her himself—ill-health alone prevented him.

Mary's reply would not seem to argue that she had come to Glasgow in any amiable mood: "There is no receipt against fear," she said, "and he would not be afraid unless culpable." She asked if Crawford had any further mission, and when he said "No" she bid him "hold his peace".

This Thomas Crawford made afterwards a deposition before the Lords, from which the above anecdote is taken, which many believe to be an utter forgery, or at least so tampered with as to be worthless. This will probably never be proved one way or another, but Crawford's account corroborates in all important particulars the most famous of the Casket Letters, that termed "No. 2" (really No. 1) or the Glasgow letter.

It has been supposed that the hand which forged the letters, forged or distorted the deposition so as to make them agree. Be this as it may, Crawford's relation of what passed between Mary and her husband fits so exactly into the story, has such an air of truth and appears to relate so precisely what was likely to have taken place, that it is impossible to ignore it.

Crawford says that Lennox had sent him on purpose to learn of this important interview, and that the King gave him the account for his father.

This is the Lennox man's relation of the speech between this tragic King and Queen. It is, in its simple brevity, dramatic and affecting, the more so when we remember that all the while Mary undoubtedly knew of the Bond against her husband. The reference to Hiegait is to a servant who is supposed to have been plotting on the King's behalf. Mary names him in her letter of January 20th to Archbishop Beaton; this affair is obscure and unimportant.

These are the vital points of the famous conversation as reported by Crawford under the title:—"The words I remember betwixt the King and Queen in Glasgow when she took him away to Edinburgh."

Mary began to reproach him (the King) about the cruelty of his letters, presumably those in which he had threatened to leave the country. The King replied that he had had cause for this so-called cruelty as she would admit when she had

thought the matter over. He added that she was the cause of his sickness, which came from her refusal to accept his offers of repentance.

The complaints against Henry Stewart so far seem to have been largely founded on his arrogance, insolence, and refusal to humble himself. According to Crawford he was then humble enough, perhaps reduced by sickness, perhaps consumed by fear for his life, and certainly, as Du Croc had said of him a few weeks before, desperate. He told Mary that he had failed in much, but that she had forgiven greater offences in others. He pleaded that he was young and had failed for lack of good advice of which he was very destitute. He declared that it was possible, in view of his extreme youth, for him to repent and be chastised by experience; he implored her pardon, told her his resolve not to fail her in any way again, and that he wished for nothing but a complete reconciliation. He then added, and this seems to be the only evidence we have as to the King's feelings towards Mary, "God knoweth how I am punished for making my god of you and for having no other thought but of you, and if at any time I offend you, you are the causc, for that when any offendeth me if, for my refuge, I might open my mind to you I would speak to no other. But when anything is spoken to me and you and I not being as husband and wife ought to be necessity compels me to keep it in my breast and brings me to such melancholy as you see me in."

According to this a passion for Mary had been the keynote of her husband's conduct, and it is quite a reasonable explanation of his behaviour. He had loved her, he had never trusted her, she had beguiled and failed him, he was forsaken and desolate.

To these protestations Mary replied that she was sorry for his sickness and would help him to get cured. She then returned to what seems to have been her major grievance against him, and asked why he would have left the country in the English ship?

He replied that this had been a meaningless threat, but that if it had been sincere he had good cause for he had nothing to keep himself or his servants as she knew as well as he.

Mary ignored this financial point and reverted to another of her grievances, that of Hiegait, the plotting servant, who is

supposed to have informed the King of a conspiracy against him.

The sick man answered, with what appears to have been frankness, that the Laird of Minto had told him that the Queen had received a letter at Craigmillar, dictated by her and subscribed by others, though she had refused to sign it herself. The reference seems to be to one of the plots against the King which were then undoubtedly in existence and had been subscribed by almost all the Lords, including Moray. After he had related this suspicious incident, the King said that he would never think that she, who was his own proper flesh, would do him hurt, and he added with an outburst of boyish defiance that—"if any other tried they would buy it dear, unless they took him sleeping".

Then, with another attempt to conciliate, he declared that he suspected no one. Mary spent as little time as possible in her sick husband's company; she was always finding some excuse to withdraw to her own lodging.

Crawford says she never would stay with him, despite his pleadings, for more than two hours at once. She was melancholy, and the King complained of this. He said he had heard she had brought a litter with her; Mary replied that it was to carry him back to Edinburgh, that it would be more easy to travel in than on horseback. He argued that the weather was too cold for a sick man to journey in this fashion; Mary then said that she would take him as far as Craigmillar, where she might be with him and not far from her son, Prince James being then in Holyrood House.

Finally the King agreed to go with Mary where she would if there might be a complete reconciliation promised on her word. If he could not have this he would not leave Glasgow. Mary pacified him and quietened his fears by saying that if she had not wished perfect peace between them she would not have come so far to fetch him. She gave him "her hand and faith of her body that she would love and use him as her husband". But first, however, she said, he must be purged and cleansed of his sickness for she minded to give him the bath at Craigmillar—whether ordinary bathing or some medicinal treatment is referred to, is not quite clear, but the reference is probably to some supposed disinfectant.

Mary then probed the sick man as to his jealousy, evidently endeavouring to make him name some particular object of his

rage, but he evaded her, said he hated no man but loved all alike. She then brought in, oddly it seems, the name of Lady Reres, the aging stout woman who has been named as Bothwell's go-between in the supposed affair of the Exchequer House.

The King's reply would seem to show he had heard of this scandal for he said he had little mind for such as she, that is, Lady Reres, and wished to God she might serve her, the Queen, to her honour.

Mary then warned him to reveal to no one their secret reconciliation for she did not think that the Lords would care for this sudden agreement.

The King, very reasonably, declared that he could not see why they should mishike it and promised that he would put no one against her if she would not rouse any against him. They must, he declared with perfect truth, work in harmony or it would turn to inconvenience to both.

Mary, who throughout the interview does not seem for a second to have taken any blame on herself for anything, though looking at her conduct in the most favourable light, she had been guilty of imprudences and indiscretions that any husband might resent, now declared that "she had never thought of any way past him, he was in fault himself". The King who, here, in Crawford's deposition, appears in a much better light than his wife, said with some dignity that his faults were published, that there were those who made greater faults than ever he made, that he believed were unknown. The reference may be to his accomplices in the Rizzio murder and to Moray, or to the secret love making with Bothwell.

When Mary was absent (this is to be assumed though it is not stated) the King asked Crawford what he thought of his journey to Edinburgh? Crawford replied that he did not like it, for if she had really wished his company she might have taken him to his own house in Edinburgh rather than to Craigmillar, a gentleman's residence two miles out of town. Crawford gave it as his opinion that she took him "more like a prisoner than her husband".

There is pathos and dignity in the resignation of the young man's reply, "that he thought little less himself save the confidence he had in her promise only, yet he would put himself in her hands though she should cut his throat, and besought God to be judge between them both".

This document (Crawford's deposition) may be a complete forgery; it may, on the other hand, have some basis in fact and have been considerably altered, with the object of Mary's destruction, by her enemies. In either case, whoever forged or tampered with this document showed extraordinary skill and insight into character so exactly does it fit into the dark story. The same may be said, but even more emphatically, of the letter which Mary was supposed by her enemies, to have written the night of her arrival in Glasgow to Bothwell, known as "the Glasgow or the Second Casket Letter", though in point of fact, it comes first.

This epistle, one of the most famous in history, has been severally described "as worthy of Shakespeare" and "a disgrace to a servant-maid", so do the opinions of critics differ. It is neither one nor the other, but a very poignant document whether it be taken as from Mary's own hand and revealing her heart and character at this period, or whether it be a forgery. In the latter case it must have been written by one who was not only able carefully to feign her handwriting, but one who knew her character and all her circumstances intimately.

All question of evidence, one way or another, apart, this letter, like Crawford's deposition, with which it substantially agrees, seems to reveal exactly what a woman in Mary's position would have written granted that she loathed her husband, was passionately in love with another man, and that it was to her vital interest to destroy the husband and marry the lover before an already blown-upon reputation was utterly blasted.

As we have seen, Mary's story shows good evidence that she was exactly in this situation. If she was innocent, and the letter is a forgery, the forger was possessed of diabolical cunning. The original, it is now proved, was in French; the Scotch and English versions of this and the other so-called Casket Letters are in existence. It was written on an odd piece of paper on which there was already a "memorial" or note, the supposition being that Mary had come to Glasgow unprovided with paper and took an odd sheet she found, a curious detail for a forger to have troubled to invent.

Mary begins this celebrated letter by relating the incident when she had rebuked the gentleman (Crawford) whom Lennox had sent out to meet her. She was angry and melancholy because she had parted from Bothwell; "being gone

from the place where I had left my heart, it may be easily judged what my countenance was, considering what the body may be without a heart, which was the cause that until dinner I had used little talk, neither would anyone venture themself thereto thinking it was not good to do so". In brief, she had been moody and no one had ventured to disturb her dangerous thoughtfulness.

She mentions that some nobles, about forty-four, came out to meet her, but no one in the town, and she understood that the town (that is Glasgow) was partisan to the Lennox faction, and she received a message from her husband asking her why she had come and why she did not lodge nearer to him? She wondered " who had told him so much ", i.e. about the approaching marriage of " Bastien " and other details of her household.

She went to see him, she asked him about his cruel letters, and he replied that he " did dream " (evidently meaning that he was not responsible when he wrote them) and that he was so glad to see her that he thought he would die. He found fault, however, with her pensiveness and she departed to her supper. He implored her to come to him again.

On her next visit he told her his grief and that he was repentant, he said he would make no Will but leave all to her (he had nothing to leave but personal effects), and that she was the cause of his sickness, which was due to the sorrow of their estrangement. He reproached her with her cruelty and for not accepting his offers of repentance, he said he had done amiss, but no worse than others of her subjects whom she had pardoned, that he was young, that he might for want of advice at his age fail but at the last profit by experience and truly repent.

He pleaded for a complete reconciliation, and in words that coincide almost exactly with Crawford's, went on to say: " God knoweth I am punished to have made my god of you ", etc. Mary writes that her answer to all this would be too long to set down; she asked him why he had threatened to leave Scotland, and he replied that that had never been his intention. She then relates her questioning about the Will Hiegait affair—the confession of this man would seem to have involved the King in the accusation of a plot to seize the infant Prince, crown him, and rule in his name.

The next passage resembles closely the Crawford deposi-

tion, the King implored Mary to lodge with him; she refused, under the excuse of his sickness, he complained about the litter, and she urged him to go to Craigmillar that she might cure him without being far from her son. He promised to do so if she would assure him of a complete reconciliation.

She comments that the disfigured young man had no desire to be seen—he was evidently disgustingly marked by the skin disease from which he suffered. The letter goes on: “As for myself, he would rather lose his life than do me the least displeasure, and then used so many kinds of flattery so coldly and so wisely that you would marvel at.”

The expression “coldly and wisely” is curious when applied to lover-like blandishments and caresses. Probably the meaning is that the King was using insincere and calculated endearments out of fear and self-interest.

There is another agreement with Crawford’s deposition when the King states he would not believe “that Mary would do him any harm, and as for anyone else, he would sell his life dear enough though he suspected none”.

He tried to keep her with him and urged her to watch in his room all night, he was suffering from insomnia and wanted the soothing effect of her company. Mary pretended to be convinced by all he had said, but made an excuse not to sit up with him. Her comment on the interview is: “You never heard him speak better nor more humbly”, and she adds with dramatic passion, “and if I had not proof of his heart to be as wax and that mine were not as a diamond no stroke but coming from your hand would make me but to have pity on him.”

She had been touched by the young man’s desolation and humility, but she did not trust him, fickle and unstable as she knew him to be, and she had hardened her heart against compassion.

The next passage appears to be written under the stress of emotion, it is rather incoherent, it seems to mean that Bothwell is not to fear that she will be unfaithful to him and that he, in return for that fidelity, is not to be won away by “that false race”. The reference must be to the Gordons whom Mary had first met as rebels, and in particular to Jane Gordon, the young wife of Bothwell. She urges Bothwell to leave “this false race for craft and deception”, and adds contemptuously that her husband always has “tears in his eyes”, that he makes much of everyone, even the meanest, that they may have pity on him.

This dreadful exhibition of fear on the part of one who had been so arrogant and insolent had evidently evoked an uneasy and transient pity; this seems consistent with the young King's humble attitude at the christening.

The next broken sentences have a convincing air of actuality, the underlying meaning is sinister.

"His father, Lennox, has bled this day at the nose and at the mouth, you can guess what token that is; I have not seen him for he is in his chamber. The King is desirous that I should give him meat with my own hands. I trust you know more there where you are than I do here. This is my first day, I will write to-morrow."

The letter is presumed to have been broken off here and continued the next evening, when Mary was able to get away from the half-distracted, half-suspicious appeals of the sick man. It is supposed that she sat up until late in the night writing it. It seems to bear traces of great emotion, the fluctuations of a mind under considerable stress, forced this way and that, but dominated in the end by one overwhelming passion. One can only repeat that if it be a forgery it is a work of extraordinary skill.

The second day begins by the writer saying that she will put down everything that occurred, however insignificant it be, so that Bothwell may judge himself on what is happening.

Mary's next words betray both her mind and her design in poignant fashion: "I do here a work that I hate much, but I had begun it this morning. Had you not list to laugh to see me so trimly make a lie, at the least dissemble and to mingle truth therewith? He (the King) hath almost told me all on the Bishop's behalf and of Sutherland, without touching any word unto him of that which you have told me; but only by flattering him and praying him to assure himself of me, and by my complaining of the Bishop I have taken the worms out of his nose." The last coarse expression is a French idiom and the one that settles the question of the language in which the letters were first written. Mary uses it in an undisputed letter of hers.

The paragraph shows clearly that Mary had won her husband's confidence and was gaining all his secrets from him without pressing him, merely by assuring him of her love and faith. She goes on:

"We are tied to false races (that is the Stewart-Lennox and the Gordon-Huntley). God forgive me and God b'nit n°

together for ever for the most faithful couple that ever He did knit together. This is my faith, I will die in it. Excuse me if I write ill, you must guess the one-half. I cannot do with all for I am ill-at-ease and glad to write and do when other folks be asleep, seeing that I cannot do as they do, according to my desire, that is lie between your arms, my dear, whom I beseech God to preserve from all ill and send you good rest. And I go to seek mine till to-morrow in the morning."

Here the writer would seem to have changed her mind; she goes on scribbling instead of endeavouring to snatch some uneasy slumber :

" But it grieves me that who should hinder me from writing unto you news of myself, so much I have to write. Send me word what you have determined thereupon that we may know the one the other's mind from marring of anything."

The writer goes on in a sort of sick desperation : she is near the point of collapse, she is almost asleep, yet as long as there is a scrap of paper above the memoranda she must go on scribbling. Coarse passages bring the letter to the interruption of the memoranda, which itself is of small importance.

" Cursed be this pocky fellow that troubleth me thus much, for I have a pleasanter matter to discourse unto you but for him. He is not much the worse but he is ill arrayed (i.e. disfigured). I thought I should have been killed by his breath, for it is worse than your uncle's breath, and yet I was set no nearer to him than in a chair by his bolster and he lieth at the further side of the bed." Here is the interruption of the notes.

Then the letter begins again with an anecdote of Lord Livingstone, who had said to her while they were warming themselves at the fire, " ' You may well go and see sick folk, yet can you not be so welcome to them as you have this day left someone in pain who shall never be merry until he hath seen you again.' " The reference is to Bothwell. " Guess you the rest," says the letter, adding : " This day I have wrought till two of the clock on this bracelet to put the key in the cleft of it, which is tied with two laces. I have so little time that it is very ill, but I will make a fairer, but in the meantime take heed that none of those that be here do see it, for all the world would know it, for I have made it in haste in their presence."

This is a curious passage. Why should Mary, after relating that Lord Livingstone and the insolent Lady Reres had been jesting about her and Bothwell, make such a mystery of the

present of the bracelet, and what does "a key in the cleft of it", which is tied with two laces, mean? If it were some manner of plaiting or needlework, it would not be possible to have a key; perhaps a cypher or initial or love token inset is meant, the translation or transcription would appear to be faulty. She adds: "I go to my tedious talks"—that is with the King. "You make me dissemble so much that I am afraid thereof with horror, and you make me to almost play (sic) the part of a traitor. Remember that if it were not for obeying you, I would rather be dead, my heart bleedeth for it."

After this outburst of remorse the letter continues on the old theme that the King will not come except under promise of a complete reconciliation. If she did not believe in his fair promises, humble and gentle as he was, she had to pretend to do so in order that she might win his trust. The King declared himself satisfied with the prospect of her renewed affection and the loyalty of the Lords, "for, as they seek not my life, I love them all equally".

The letter goes on to say that the bearer, who, if the epistle is genuine, would be "Paris", Nicolas Hubert, Bothwell's valet (who had been in Mary's service and who afterwards said that he took letters to and from Glasgow and Edinburgh at this period), "could say many pretty things, for I have too much to write and it is late and I trust him upon your word". This seems characteristic of Mary's wild imprudence. She had been worrying lest anyone should see Bothwell wearing the bracelet she had made and yet she is prepared on his word to trust a servant "with many pretty things".

She then reiterates the King's confidence in herself: "In short he will go anywhere upon my word."

Then, torn again by remorse: "Alas, and I never deceived anybody, but I remit myself wholly to your will." She is the woman again, wholly submissive to the master. "Send me word what I should do, and whatsoever happens to me I will obey you." Then, betraying the deadly purpose behind the whole letter: "Think also if you will not find some invention more secret by physic, for he is to take physic at Craigmillar and the baths also and shall not come forth at long time." Put plainly—would it not be safer to poison the King instead of pursuing the scheme that had already been mooted for his destruction? She repeats the King was suspicious, but trusts in her word that no harm was intended him, she regrets the

deception, "I shall never be willing to beguile one who puts this trust in me." Then again the note of complete submission : " Nevertheless you may do all and do not esteem me the less therefore for you are the cause thereof. For my own revenge I would not do it."

She would not allow the murder because of the Rizzio assassination but for love of Bothwell she will go to any length; it is not hatred of her husband that inspires her, but desire to please her lover.

The next passage coincides with Crawford's deposition. The King was complaining that his faults were public, but those who had offended more deeply had done so in secret. He mentions Lady Reres in the same terms as those given by Crawford: "For a surety he mistrusts us because of that that you know, and (fears) for his life."

The sick man feared that murder was intended because he could not forget the cause given for revenge in the murder of Rizzio. Mary, however, reassured him once more: "In the end, after I had spoken two or three words to him he was very merry and glad."

Another mysterious entry about the bracelet: "I have not seen him this night for ending your bracelet, but I can find no clasp for it." This extraordinary ornament required then, not only a key and ties but a clasp. "It is ready and yet I fear lest it shall bring you ill-hap or it should be known if you were hurt." The bracelet was to be worn concealed under the sleeve; it might be revealed if Bothwell was wounded or sick. She asked him to let her know whether he would have this souvenir or not, she wants more money, and to know when she shall return to Edinburgh and how far she may speak?

Then she returns again to the wretched victim. "He is mad when he hears of Lethington, and of you and of my brother (Moray). Of your brother he saith nothing, but of the Earl of Argyll he doth. I am afraid to hear him talk. He speaketh nothing of those abroad, neither good nor ill, but avoids speaking of them. His father keeping his chamber I have not seen him, but he hath sent for me and prayed me to see him rise to-morrow in the morning, early. In short this bearer shall disclose unto you the rest, but if I learn anything I will make every night a memorial thereof and he, the bearer, shall tell you the cause of my stay. Burn this letter for it is too dangerous, neither is there anything well said in it, for I

think upon nothing but upon grief (trouble is probably a better translation) while you be at Edinburgh."

For the first and only time in the letter Mary reminds Bothwell what she sacrifices for his sake, and warns him what she will expect in return.

"Now if it please you, my dear life, I spare neither honour, conscience nor hazard nor greatness, take it in good part and not according to the interpretation of your false brother-in-law (Hunty) to whom I pray you give no credit against the most faithful lover that ever you had or shall have. See not also her (Jane Gordon, Lady Bothwell) whose feigned tears you ought not more to regard than the true travails which I endure to deserve her place for the gaining of which, against my own nature I do betray those that would prevent me."

There is something displeasing in the almost cringing humility of this, especially from a Queen.

"God forgive me and give you, my only friend, the good luck and prosperity which your faithful lover doth wish unto you, who hopeth shortly to be another thing unto you for the reward of my pains."

Her recompense then, for luring her miserable husband to his doom was to become the wife of a man like Bothwell, to enter into a marriage that she must have known, even infatuate as she may have been, would mean her ruin. She speaks of her own honour and conscience, she dislikes the deceptive part she is playing, she declares that for her own sake she would not do it, yet she breathes no word of reproach against, nor regret for, Bothwell's part in the crime. It will please him, and that is enough. She does not blame him, either for the contemplated murder or for the share he makes her take in it. In the concluding paragraph she complains that she has written nothing, that is, nothing of what is really in her heart, and that it is very late, and therefore, though she could never be weary of writing to her lover, yet she will end, after kissing his hand.

She begs him to forgive her scribbling, she tells him to read it over twice. She excuses too the paper she has used, with a memorial in the middle: "Pray remember your friend and write unto her and often, love me always as I shall love you."

It is remarkable that neither in this much disputed letter nor in Crawford's deposition is there any mention of the infant Prince save the one casual reference to the fact that Mary wanted to stay at Craigmillar to be near her son at Holyrood House.

He is not even mentioned among the things that Mary would sacrifice through her love for Bothwell, nor is he brought in as any argument in the poignant conversations between husband and wife. Neither of them says "let the child bring us together" or "because you are the mother of the child I will believe you" or "for the child's sake let us be reconciled". Perhaps the parentage of the little James was too delicate a matter to be touched upon. We do not know if Mary was a devoted mother. She may have spent hours playing with the baby, she may have totally neglected him—there is no record. It is not likely that her growing passion for Bothwell left much room in her heart for another emotion.

Assuming that the Casket Letters are genuine, or in part, at least, based on some lost authentic originals, that usually marked "No. 1" is really "No. 2" and was sent off on Saturday, January 25th, from Glasgow, where Mary waited in vain for a reply in her first letter sent by Bothwell's valet, Paris.

It is short, and on the same note as the preceding. It begins with a reproach : "It seems that with your absence, forgetfulness is joined, considering that at your departure you promised to send me news from you. Nevertheless I can learn none. And yet did I yesterday look for that that should make me merrier than I shall be. I think you do the like for your return, prolonging it more than you have promised. As for me, if I hear no other matter of you according to my mission, I bring the man on Monday to Craigmillar where he shall be on Wednesday."

If she heard no more from Bothwell she would bring the King on Monday to Craigmillar which she would reach in two days' time, then if she still did not hear from her lover and master, she would go to Edinburgh "to be let blood".

The wretched King was cheerful, "the merriest that ever you saw", and was trying caresses and flatteries to make her believe that he loved her. But this display of affection so nauseated her that it brought on her old complaint that had been worse since her confinement—the pain in the side. She is waiting for some medicine for this which Paris had promised to bring her, or is the reference to a letter from Bothwell that would cure her of her distress? "I pray you send me word from you at large and what I shall do if you be not returned when I shall be there." If he were not in Edinburgh when

she was at Craigmillar what were to be her instructions? If Bothwell did not behave "wisely" she saw "the whole burden falling upon my shoulders".

Whether these two letters and Crawford's deposition be forgeries or no, whatever kind of conversation passed between Mary and her husband, the one certainty is that she brought him from Glasgow, on Monday, January 27th, where he was safely guarded in a town friendly to the Lennox faction and in company of his father and his own retainers, to Edinburgh where she knew that not only all the nobles were his enemies but that they had entered into a definite Bond against him. If the King's knowledge did not go as far as this he at least had a definite suspicion of what was intended against him and had been especially afraid of Moray and his accomplices in the Rizzio murder. Lennox said afterwards that he did not fear for his son's life, but others declare that he was very reluctant to allow the fatal journey.

It seems to follow without question and apart from any debate as to the genuineness of the three documents quoted above that Mary must have used some insincere arts to quieten her husband's apprehension and to make him trust himself in her hands. For some reason that is not clear, possibly because Bothwell had already made other arrangements, the King was not taken to Craigmillar, but after a halt at Callendar, to a house in Kirk o' Field. This place was outside Edinburgh wall, in an ill neighbourhood, though not quite, perhaps, of such ill-repute as one is given to understand by Buchanan, who describes the house as a ruinous building, which had stood empty for many years in a lonely place between old, fallen walls and deserted cloisters, near a few almshouses. In reality, the piece of ground, known in the Scots vernacular as "Kirk o' Field" had been at one time the garden of the Collegiate Church of St. Mary's in the Field, and the site of the houses of the Dominican monastery adjoining.

Not far away was the large new mansion belonging to the Hamiltons, Lennox's hereditary enemies, who had been deeply angered by his son's sudden and brief power. It is said that there was some suggestion that the King should lodge in this palace, but it was occupied, perhaps to prevent this, by Archbishop Hamilton, he who had officiated at the baptism of the young Prince, and who had just been given consistory powers by

Mary; it is said that he was surrounded by armed retainers in this palace when the young King lodged near.

When Henry Stewart was brought to the house in Kirk o' Field, the Church and the monastic buildings were partly demolished through the zeal of the Reformers and the town wall on which they abutted was in ruins. It seems to have been a kind of "no man's land" and was separated from the open fields by a dismal lane known as "Thieves' Row".

The actual house to which the sick King, "that fair face" covered with "taffeta" (that is either a silk mask or patches of sticking plaster) was brought by Mary, was on the West side of what has been supposed to be the Provost's lodgings. It is extraordinary, in a tale in which so much is extraordinary, that Henry Stewart, who had objected to Craigmillar, accepted without demur this unlikely and unpromising dwelling which seems almost incredibly desolate and ill-omened and was so dangerously near to a palace, in those days equivalent to a stronghold, of his enemies the Hamiltons.

Mary seems, however, to have succeeded in gaining her husband's confidence in a manner which, under all the circumstances, appears miraculous, as if she had indeed laid a spell on the unfortunate youth. Despite the lugubrious and solitary situation, the ruins and open fields beyond, the dismal alms-houses and ill-famed "Thieves' Row", the house in which the King actually lodged was made comfortable, and even splendid. It was a Deanery or Prebendary and had been lately used by Canon Robert Balfour, whose brother, James, afterwards Commander of Edinburgh Castle, drew up the Bond against the King.

The rooms were small, but even royalty, in this period, was used to cramped accommodation. The longer façade of the house faced the quadrangle, with the old cloisters or garth of the Dominicans, and the shorter façade was on the town wall and opened into "Thieves' Row". There was, conveniently for those who meant mischief, another opening into the quadrangle, so that it was possible to pass right through the house on the ground floor—one side into "Thieves' Row" and the fields beyond, and the other side through the quadrangle and the ruined monastic buildings into the fields where stood Hamilton House, a large, imposing residence, if one can believe the contemporary sketch of this scene, resembling more a castle than a palace. The ruined Church of St. Mary's, of which little remained, stood in another field well away from the buildings.

This strange lodging, though it may have been and likely enough was, as Buchanan says, damp and ruinous, was very handsomely appointed. A gorgeous bed that had belonged to Mary of Guise and that had been given by the Queen to her husband together with a quantity of cloth of gold shortly before, was set up in the room selected for the King's bedchamber. It was of violet-brown velvet lined with watered crimson; rich tapestries were hung on the walls and every luxury that the age knew was provided. The King had a few personal servants with him who seemed to have all been English, but no manner of armed guard or retainers, nor any body of friends or supporters.

The house was of two storeys and rested on arched vaults; the Queen chose for her own use a lower chamber that had the two entrances from the garden and from the quadrangle, both of these locked; the King lay above in his apartment that was accommodated with a toilet closet and a garde-robe. A body-servant, an Englishman by the name of Taylor, slept in his master's room; three other lackeys slept in a small room that ran at right-angles from the King's apartment to the town walls. It is difficult, if not impossible to discover the exact position and description of this house, the precise arrangement of the rooms, etc., even after the vast amount of laborious research which has been spent on the subject.

This much appears clear and certain: the house was situated among ruins close to desolate fields and gardens that would be, especially at this time of the year, a Scotch February, entirely neglected. Access was easy to it from both sides; the King had only four servants with him, no manner of guard or protection, he was close to the large new house of the Duke of Châtelherault, his enemy, and, unable to leave his bed by reason of his sickness as he was, it was impossible for him to inspect either the rooms underneath or the cellars or to know who came and went during the day and the night. Locks would be no security, for it would be quite possible for the man who had arranged the house to have made duplicates of the keys. The sick man would also be without news, save that which Mary chose to bring him.

Despite his previous fears, however, and the very inauspicious circumstances under which he found himself, he appears to have been perfectly satisfied, and, on the 7th of February, when he had been little more than a week at Kirk o' Field he wrote to his father that his health had greatly improved through "the

loving care of my love, the Queen, who doth use herself like a natural and loving wife".

Lennox says that even as his son was writing this letter the Queen gave him a Judas' kiss.

Who would there be to report this circumstance to Lennox? It must be servants' gossip.

The third Casket Letter is presumed to fall on this date, that is, the 7th of February, 1567. It is very confused and obscure, but it is taken to mean that Mary was endeavouring to have her husband killed in a chance medley brawl with Lord Robert Stewart, Moray's brother. Lord Robert is supposed to have given the King a hint as to his danger, the King then complained to Mary, who at once sent Bothwell to bring Lord Robert to the house in Kirk o' Field, in order that the two might quarrel, and Lord Robert, probably with Bothwell's aid, despatch the King and the affair appear like an accident. Cecil mentions that there was some trouble between Lord Robert Stewart and the King, and a version of the affray is given by Buchanan. Mary is represented as setting the two men at deadly feud, making the reckoning that it should be gain to her whichsoever of them perished. But, according to the letter, while they were laying hands on their weapons she called Moray to separate them. The whole episode seems most unlikely and even grotesque. How could the King, who could not sit up on horseback and who seems never to have left his bed all the while he was in Kirk o' Field, have engaged in a fight with an armed, healthy man?

It seems improbable, even, that he, in his bedgown and with his face, as we know, covered in taffeta, would have even been able to lay his hand on a weapon.

For the rest, this Third Letter reveals nothing but reiterates promises of devotion and affection and demands of the like in return.

On the night that Mary is supposed to have written this, the 7th of February, she slept in her chamber, under the King's, at Kirk o' Field. She did not do so again, but continued to lodge at Holyrood and to make frequent visits to her husband.

On the night of February 9th there was a great festival held at Holyrood; a ball and a banquet in honour of two of Mary's servants who were getting married. One was the French cook, sometimes referred to as a musician, Sebastien Page or Pagez, nicknamed "Bastien", with Christina Hogg, and the other was that of John Stewart with Margaret Carwood.

Sebastien Page, who seems to have been much in Mary's favour, was the man who had devised the mask of the satyrs, which had so annoyed Bedford's English retainers at the baptism of the Prince. Buchanan says he was "an Avernois, a man in great favour with the Queen for his skill in music and merry jesting".

On the occasion of this double wedding a supper was given by the Queen, and was attended by most of the nobles then in close attendance upon her, including Bothwell, Argyll, Huntly, and Cassilis, and many of the Court ladies. The Queen had been with her husband that day, and she left the supper-table to visit him again; Bothwell and many of her other friends either accompanied or followed her, so that the little house at Kirk o' Field must have been full with a gay and splendid company who had come through the winter night from the festival.

A little before eleven o'clock the Queen with this train, on horseback and lit by *flambeaux*, returned to Holyrood.

About two o'clock in the morning an explosion "like that of twenty-five pieces of cannon", as the French Ambassador describes it, shook Edinburgh. This was followed by the sound of falling masonry and outcries of terror, and the news soon reached Holyrood—by whom, or how, or exactly when, we do not know—that the King's lodging at Kirk o' Field had been blown into the air and the King murdered.

Bothwell, who was in his bed, rose up, and with the Earls of Argyll, Huntly, Atholl, and some ladies, went to the Queen and gave her the news, but we do not know how she received it. Nor do we know, and it is not likely that anyone now will come to this knowledge, exactly how the young King perished, nor who were the men who committed the murder, though there is no doubt as to who organized the crime.

There are many accounts of this famous event and it is impossible to fit them one into another so as to form a coherent whole for so much is contradictory, confused, and even incredible.

The King's body, clad only in his shirt, had been found in a field or garden the other side of "Thieves' Row"; beside him was the corpse of his body-servant, the Englishman, Taylor, and near lay the King's purple bedgown lined with sable.

This much is clear—Henry Stewart had not been killed by the explosion. He had either been murdered in his bed and then dragged to the place where his body was found, or, hearing

some noise that alarmed him, he had endeavoured to escape with his servant and they had both been slain by the pursuing assassins. Those who were afterwards punished for the crime confessed to the blowing up but knew nothing of the actual murder. Neither is it known whether the house had been undermined before the King took up his residence there, or whether barrels of gunpowder had been rolled into the room under the King's chamber, that is, the room where Mary had slept on two occasions, one on the very night before the murder.

Such of the King's English servants who had escaped knew nothing save the fact of the sudden explosion, which had caused them to fly for their lives.

The version given in the Lennox Manuscript which was compiled by the murdered King's father after the event and put together, of course, with the object of implicating Mary up to the hilt, is nevertheless corroborated in many details from other sources, though several of these are dubious. Whoever put together this version was either well informed, for truth is always vivid and effective, or possessed of a dramatic imagination.

* * * * *

The Lennox account relates that the Queen stayed with her husband until eleven of the clock and then gave him a handsome ring as a token of loyalty and complete reconciliation. A contemporary doggerel against Mary mentions this ring. The ball at Holyrood is not mentioned as the excuse she gave for leaving her husband. In this version it is Bothwell who reminds her that she intended to ride to Seton early the next morning. The King wished to accompany her and ordered his "great horses" to be in readiness by five o'clock in the morning, intending to ride them at that hour. He was then considerably recovered from his sickness, evidently, but not quite in normal health; but why this early rising? Five o'clock on a winter morning?

The Queen, with her glittering train, then went her way, and, as if her departure were not already conspicuous enough, a flash of noise and light and colour in the dark night, she fired a sack-but at the corner of the street "as a signal to the murderers".

The scene in the doomed man's chamber, where he remained alone with his servant Taylor, reminds us, in this recital, of that where Desdemona prepares for her last sleep.

The room, though small, was very handsomely appointed as we know from inventories that have been discovered. Not only was there the famous French bed of violet-brown velvet lined with crimson silk fringed with gold and silver and with a silk mattress, there was a table with a cloth of green velvet, a chair of estate covered in violet velvet, rich tapestries on the walls, and in the halls (it sounds a gloomy article of furniture) a dais with black velvet and double draperies, and an unnecessary, one would think, piece of splendour in the shape of a double-seated chair of state covered with watered silk of red and yellow, the Scottish colours.

According to the unattested evidence of one of the surviving servants and the Lennox Manuscript, Mary had ordered the costly bed to be taken down and a travelling one put in its place, placating her husband by telling him that they "should lie together in the rich bed the next night". "Though", says Lennox, "her meaning was to save the bed from the blowing up and the fire of gunpowder."

The King's surviving servant, Thomas Nelson, confirms this story, yet it seems to have been the Mary of Guise bed in which Henry Stewart was lying on the last night of his life. The house would be very silent for we hear nothing of wind nor rain and no other noise could have penetrated to this desolate spot in the midst of the winter night.

The young King sat up late, he seemed uneasy and fell into a melancholy conversation with his servant, who must be the authority for the account if it be authentic.

Mary, the King remarked, had made some reference to the fact that nearly a year had passed since the murder of Rizzio. It was long since she had touched on this sinister subject and he had hoped that she had forgotten it. He pondered over the remark she had made over the grave of the murdered Italian, that "a fatter than he should lie near it, ere twelve months was out".

Why should the King, who had so whole-heartedly abandoned himself to Mary's blandishments, and put himself so completely in her power, suddenly, on the fatal night, become melancholy? He then, perhaps to keep his courage up, drank to his servant, after they had sung together the Fifth Psalm. Would Henry Stewart, as a Roman Catholic, sing this in Latin? He certainly would not use one of the many metrical versions of the psalms then flooding Scotland which were becoming so

popular as to take the place of the old ballads, for these were sponsored by heretics and the King could have had little or no knowledge of the Scots tongue. Nor, one thinks, would he be likely to use one of the English versions so admired by the Protestants.¹ Be this as it may, the words of this psalm are so appropriate to the place and circumstance that one suspects that this touch may have been added afterwards. The lament of the young man about to be cut off in the midst of his sins and in the early flower of his youth, can be heard in the words: "O hearken Thou unto the voice of my calling, my King and my God: to Thee will I make my prayer." The murderers are threatened in: "The Lord will abhor both the bloodthirsty and deceitful man." The ninth and tenth verses appear to refer directly to Mary: "There is no faithfulness in His mouth, their inward hearts are very wickedness, their throat is an open sepulchre, they flatter with their tongues."

The last three verses may be read as a curse, which, indeed, befell; none of those concerned in the murder of Henry Stewart came to a peaceful end, or none but a few of the most obscure. This was one of those crimes, a veritable deed of darkness, which do seem to be avenged from on high. The whole dreadful night seemed haunted; the power and horror of those hours went down the years and lingered long in the imagination of men:

"Destroy Thou them, O God! let them perish through their own imagination. Cast them out in the multitude of their ungodliness for they have rebelled against Thee."

The young King, then, probably wearing the superb velvet gown lined with rich sable, lay down on the silken palliasse, the down pillows, and the servant drew the crimson and violet-brown curtains with tassels of gold and silver.

Fifty men then quietly surrounded the house; sixteen others, led by Bothwell, entered it by means of duplicate keys. The Earl had slipped away from the festival at Holyrood and wore a heavy German cavalry cloak over his ball dress of black silk, velvet and satin. He and his russians then entered the King's chamber, suffocated him with a wet handkerchief dipped in vinegar—a proceeding that one would think would have taken a considerable time and caused a horrible commotion—strangled Taylor, then carried the two bodies out of the house across "Thieves' Row", flung the corpses in the garden under a tree,

¹ A Latin version of the Psalms by George Buchanan, with a dedication to Mary, had been published 1566.

the nightgown beside them, and then blew up the house—a clumsy and unnecessary proceeding.

Lennox, who appears to be writing on the authority of two of the King's servants who escaped—probably Nelson and Anthony Standon—adds to the dark and horrible details that the Queen, who had boasted to her servants when they admired her strength and courage after the dreadful ride to Hermitage, that she could “find it in her heart to see and behold that which any man dare do, and find it in her heart to do anything that a man dare do if her strength would serve her” was among Bothwell's assassins, clad as a man.

The foundation of this fable is probably Mary's love of man's attire. It seems that she was fond of putting on the cavalier's dress whenever the chance offered, a caprice often found in her type of woman. Lennox adds: “She loved, oftentimes, to be in this apparel, dancing secretly with the King her husband, and going in masks by night through the streets.”

This is one version of the celebrated crime; others say that the King was strangled, after “he fell out of the air” (that is, after the explosion which had not killed him) with his garters. Others relate that the King was dragged to a stable and murdered by a napkin being thrust into his mouth, and yet another tale was that he escaped from the house (probably by the window) when he heard the murderers outside, and that he was strangled in the garden where he was found. Some women, those living in the almshouses probably, heard him cry out: “Pity me, kinsmen, for the love of Him who pitied all the world.” The kinsmen would be Douglases, either Archibald or George of that name, who were related to the King; both appear to have been “*bravi*” or professional murderers, completely in the interest of Morton and Bothwell; it is probable that they did the actual murder.

Another version makes the King plead for compassion on the grounds of his descent from Henry VII, an argument that sounds strained in such a connection, but Mary herself used it, towards the end of her life, in moments of emotional stress.

One George Hackett is said to have first knocked up Bothwell in his lodging, as Sheriff of Edinburghshire the Earl was responsible for law and order. The King's body was examined by doctors who declared that he had died as a result of the explosion and later he was embalmed and laid in state in Holyrood.

Buchanan states that the Queen herself came to gaze long

at the body of the youth who, so short a time before, had so violently inflamed her caprice or passion.

On the day of the murder, Mary, or Maitland for Mary, wrote an account of the crime to Archbishop Beaton. The Queen had, that morning (February 11th) received that prelate's warning as to a possible plot, and according to the report that Drury, the Marshal of Berwick, sent to Cecil, she had also to hand "letters and cyphers" from the Cardinal of Lorraine and the Spanish Ambassador (to France), bidding her "to take heed whom she trusts with her secrets and to give her warning that her husband should shortly be slain".

This was the report that Mary allowed to get about; the letters *may*, however, have advised her to detach herself, for her honour's sake, from men planning to murder her husband.

The account of the crime given in the letter that was to justify Mary to Catherine de' Medici and the French generally reads :

" This night past, a little after two hours after midnight, the house wherein the King was lodged was, in one instant, blown into the air, he lying sleeping in his bed, with such a vehemency that of the whole lodging, walls, and others, there is nothing remaining, no, not a stone above another, but all either carried far away or dashed in dross to the very groundstone. It must have been done by the force of powder, and appears to have been a mine. By whom it has been done or in what matter it appears not yet. We doubt not but, according to the vigilance our Council has begun to already use, the certainty of all shall be used shortly, and the same being discovered, which we wot God will never suffer to lie hidden, and we hope to punish the same with such rigour as serve for an example of this cruelty to all ages to come. Always, whoever has taken this wicked enterprise in hand, we assure ourselves it was designed as well for ourselves as for the King, for we lay the most part of all last week in that same lodging (and was there accompanied with the most part of the Lords that are in this town) and had that same night, at midnight, and of very chance, tarried not all night there by reason of some masque at the Abbey of Holyrood. But we believe it was not chance but God that put it in our heads."

Mary, or Maitland, showed no great cleverness in this eagerness to insist that the plot was against herself as well as against her unfortunate husband. Everyone in Edinburgh must have known that she had left Kirk o' Field with a considerable retinue

with noise and lights at eleven o'clock and that she had appcared openly at the marriage masque in the palace. No conspirator could possibly have been so clumsy as to have believed that she was still in Kirk o' Field at the time of the explosion. The Council to which Mary refers themselves sent an account of the same affair to the Queen-Mother of France, but this was signed by at least two of the ringleaders among the murderers, Bothwell and Huntly, as well as by Maitland, who was probably cognizant of the plot. It is rather ironic in its reading, especially in view of the emphatic language :

" MADAME,

The strange events which occurred in this town last night constrains us to take the liberty of sending you word of the unhappy deed perpetrated on the person of our King.

" About two hours after midnight his lodging, while he was in bed, was blown violently into the air, by gunpowder as far as one can judge by the sound and the terrible suddenness of the action. The explosion was so violent that not only the roof and ceiling, but even the walls down to the foundations were demolished, and there is not left one stone upon another. The authors of this crime would very nearly have destroyed the Queen in the same way, with most of the Lords at present in her suite, who had been in the King's chamber until nearly midnight. Her Majesty might easily have remained there all night, but God has been so gracious to us that these assassins have been foiled of a part of their prey and has reserved Her Majesty to take the vengeance which such a barbarous and inhuman act deserves.

" We are making inquiries and have no doubt that in a short time we shall succeed in discovering those who have perpetrated this deed, for God would never permit that a crime like this should remain hidden or unpunished.

" Having once discovered them, Your Majesty and everyone shall see that the country of Scotland will not willingly endure a disgrace upon her shoulders such as would be heavy enough to make her odious to the whole of Christendom while these guilty persons remain hidden or unpunished."

This bold document was signed, not only by the insolent Bothwell, the reckless Huntly, and by the Archbishop of St. Andrews whose sumptuous new palace near Kirk o' Field was supposed to have housed the armed retainers who were believed to have hurried out on the night of the 9th February and joined in the murder, but by two Protestant Bishops, those of Ross and of Galway, by some nobles of more or less respectable character,

and by at least one man of high principles and moderate opinion, the Earl of Atholl.

The Council also sent to Catherine de' Medici, whose good opinion they seemed very desirous of earning, a certain Seigneur de Clarnault. This Frenchman was to satisfy Catherine as to all the details she might require of the tragedy of Kirk o' Field. He would not, of course, have been sent on this errand if he had had anything disadvantageous to say either about Mary or the Lords. He confirmed their accounts in the following report :

"The Queen with the principal nobles of the Court visited the King and stayed two or three hours and then attended the marriage of one of her gentlemen, as she had promised, or, it is thought, she would have stayed till midnight, or one o'clock, seeing their good agreement for three weeks past. She retired soon from the wedding to go to bed, and about two a.m. a tremendous noise occurred, as of a volley of twenty-five or thirty cannon, arising the whole town. And on her sending to know whence it came they found the King's lodging totally destroyed and himself sixty or eighty steps from the house in a garden, dead, also his *valet-de-chambre* and a young page.

"One may imagine the agony and distress of this poor princess at such a misfortune chancing when Her Majesty and the King were on such good terms. It is well seen this unhappy affair proceeded from an underground mine; as yet the author is unknown."

De Clarnault seems to have been wrong about the page, and it is noteworthy that he writes "one may *imagine* the distress and agony of this poor princess" but does not say that he has witnessed any such display of emotion.

Nau, in his History, which he wrote under his mistress's immediate supervision, so that when we read this statement we are merely reading Mary's justification, puts it: "When the Queen was told what had occurred she was in great grief and kept her chamber all that day." From this it would seem that Mary herself considered one day's seclusion sufficient tribute to the memory of her husband. There are disputes as to her subsequent behaviour.

Some say she remained shut away from the world in the full formality of royal mourning, others that this display of official grief was only put on to deceive, that when there was no one looking the curtains were drawn, the candles went out and the Queen dried her tears.

We do not know, Buchanan being so unreliable, if she looked indeed upon her husband's body. He received a modest funeral in Holyrood, where he, surely the most luckless of all the luckless Kings of Scotland, was laid beside his father-in-law, James V.

This seems to dispose of the anecdote that he was buried beside Rizzio in fulfilment of Mary's menace—"A fatter than he should lie near him before the twelve months was out", for it seems incredible that the Piedmontese was buried in the royal tombs.

We have Sir William Drury's evidence that the Queen and two of her ladies remained in Holyrood Chapel in prayer from eleven in the evening until three the next morning on Good Friday, March 28th, five days before there had been a Requiem sung over the remains. Drury also noted that "the Queen breaketh very much".

According to Melville, the Queen, the morning after the murder, was "sorrowful and quiet", while Bothwell had the insolence to put forward an explanation of the murder that was too wild ever to be offered again. He told Melville that thunder (sic) had come out of the air and burnt the King's lodgings.

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Robert Melville was sent with the news to make the best tale he could to Queen Elizabeth, and he reported that Mary was confined to her chamber with the intention of not leaving it "before to-day as is the custom of widows there". On the other hand, the contempt, or at least, the neglect shown in the burial of the King caused great indignation. This on the authority of Secretary Cecil. Yet again we hear that after the burial of the murdered man in Holyrood, that is to say, six days after the murder, Mary went to Seton, leaving the Prince in the keeping of Bothwell and Huntly in Holyrood.

Edinburgh might well have been unbearable to Mary, and it is quite compatible with her innocence and distress that she should wish to withdraw into solitude and seclusion. But it is reported by Sir William Drury that the Queen led a gay and careless life at Seton, where she was soon joined by Bothwell, Huntly, and where she played with these two noblemen and Lord Seton in games of golf and *pele-mele*, and shot at the butts.

However, John Lesley, Bishop of Ross, in his famous defence of the Queen published at Liége in 1591, declares that the Queen

would have continued her solitary mourning indefinitely had she not been ordered, for her health's sake, to take "some good open and wholesome air".

Queen Elizabeth, who seems to have been genuinely amazed and horrified by the murder, sent Sir Henry Killigrew to Edinburgh, to spy out the news on the spot.

The English envoy saw Mary on the 8th of March, in Edinburgh, after he had dined with Moray, who, never in the way and never out of the way, had been absent from the capital on the night of the murder, but had now returned, with Lethington, Argyll, and Bothwell.

Mary received Killigrew as if she were in deep grief; the chamber was so dark that he could not see her face, "but by her words she seemed very doleful, and accepted my Sovereign's letters and messages in a very thankful manner".

Killigrew could not then hear any gossip or rumours as to the murderers. But he related that Lennox, safe among his friends in Glasgow, was already seeking revenge. Killigrew also noted that though there was no present trouble among the people there was "a general misliking among the commons and others, which abhor the detestable murder of their King, a shame, as they suppose, to the whole nation. The preachers pray openly to God that it will please Him both to reveal and revenge, exhorting all men to prayer and repentance".

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Considering that the King was, despite his birth, a foreigner in the estimation of the Scots, a Papist and personally unpopular, it is remarkable how the people and the Kirk took up from the first the cause of his revenge. Scotland was by no means unused to bloody crimes—Henry Stewart was himself a murderer, the brutal crime in which he had taken part and which took place by his express wish in the presence of his wife so near the birth of her child, was as ugly a business as the deed which brought him himself to an untimely end. But it does not so seem to have been regarded in popular estimation.

It was probably argued that there might be an excuse for a lively and passionate young man violently despatching a presumptuous servant, that a King might be justified in thrusting his dagger into an insolent menial, that a wronged husband could assuredly revenge his wrong in blood. The murder of Rizzio, it may have been thought, could have been excused by several specious arguments and according to that elastic code of

honour whereby the infidelity of a wife will excuse any manner of atrocious vengeance.

But for the murder of the King there was no excuse, no possible justification in the minds of the people of Scotland; the manner of his death, whether the house was blown up by a mine or by barrels of powder, whether the explosion took place before or after the murder mattered very little to the general course of the drama; Mary's young husband was murdered, and the house at Kirk o' Field was blown up at two o'clock in the morning of February 10th; this was sufficient for the people of Scotland.

We have no account of Mary's behaviour when Bothwell brought her the news; her enemies say she showed the greatest calm; it is related that when she returned from Kirk o' Field to Holyrood she met Nicolas Hubert, the valet nicknamed "Paris", and seeing his face blackened with powder, remarked: "Jesu, Paris, how begrimed you are!" Had she been possessed of any sensitiveness and nobility the news of this murder must have put her into a frenzy of anguish, and this even if she had loathed her husband and desired to get rid of him. It would have been impossible for her to forget for a second that the man had trusted her, put himself in the power of his enemies because he accepted her word as pledge for his safety and believed himself reconciled with her, and that he had been brutally murdered entirely because of this confidence he had placed in her honour. An innocent woman under these atrocious circumstances would have tortured herself by dwelling on the undoubted fact that her husband in the few terrible minutes between the time he realized the fate intended for him and his death, must have believed that she had betrayed him heartlessly to his bitterest enemies. Taking it that Mary had no hand in the murder, this thought would have tormented her to the day of her own death. And the sting of it would have been increased by the remembrance of the quarrels she had had with her husband, of the wrongs he had done her, and the high words that had passed between them. It would have been unbearable for her to think that he had died believing that she, out of revenge, had willed his death.

The young King had been, nominally, at least, a Roman Catholic, and he had been sent unshaven to his account. Mary's mind would surely have dwelt with horror on this, and if she had had any imagination at all she must have pictured dreadful details of the murder.

One Captain Cullen, who is supposed to have been one of the assassins and afterwards to have confessed, is reported to have said: "The King was long a-dying and in his strength made debate for his life."

Could Mary have thought with equanimity of the strong and defenceless young man struggling with an overwhelming number of assassins? If she were innocent she had been most foully betrayed, for the murderers must have known that her husband had come to Kirk o' Field relying on her protection, and in treating this as nothing and in slaughtering the man whom her action had made defenceless, they were doing her a desperate wrong. Surely an innocent woman would have turned in a frenzy against these bitterly-false friends? She would have thought nothing of difficulty, of scandal, of her own peril, especially a woman like this woman, who was known to be bold and adroit, fertile in expedience and impetuous where her passions were aroused.

Buchanan's account that she behaved with callous indifference may be dismissed as a calumny; but nowhere else is there any hint of real despair. And a few hours after she received the news of the murder she was sufficiently controlled to compose or sanction a letter of justification to the French Court, and eager to clear herself of any implication or concern in the tragedy. Seven days after the murder, on February 18th, she wrote to her Ambassador in France a second letter that obviously she intended that he should use as his defence of her when the King's death became known in France.

With a coolness and a cleverness which is surprising under the circumstances and argues better for Mary's head than her heart, she turns the many letters from France to account.

Her statement, though it contains some strong expressions, bears no sign of emotion or agitation, and the reference to the murder comes after an urgent request for the dowry money due.

"We thank you heartily for your advertisement (warning) made to us. . . . But alas! your message came too late . . . even the very morning before your servant's arrival was the horrible and treasonable act against the King's person that may well appear to have been conspired against ourselves, the circumstance of the matter being considered."

Mary, after again putting forward this futile argument of her own escape, declares that she will not be "tedious" on the

subject, and goes back to her eager demand for money. This, from a young woman, seven days widowed by black murder, from a young husband, with whom she was on tender terms of affection, rings false. It is not the language of the shocked horror, of the outraged innocence, of the desperate grief such a woman in such a situation should have felt.

It is clear, amid so much that is obscure, that the Queen's attitude after her husband's murder was deeply resented by that populace who had exclaimed, only a few years ago—"God bless that sweet face!" It seemed, to the mind of the man in the street, as if John Knox had been indeed a prophet, and that the female reign of "stinking pride" had truly plunged the country into disgrace and horror, and that the foreign idolatress had brought woe on the land. Not that this murder was more dreadful than that of any other King of Scotland, more atrocious in detail than the butchery of Cardinal Beaton or David Rizzio, not that the people were not used to blood, public executions, tortures, fights, all brutalities of civil war and frontier clashes, but this crime was of a peculiar significance that set it apart from all other deaths, for it seemed, in the popular imagination, to be but one episode in a succession of black, unnatural events organized from Hell, and put in practice by devils.

The murdered King, despised during his life, achieved a dreadful power after his death. Whatever might have been this young man's faults or his unpopularity the taking off of him was regarded as unforgivable. In an age of cruelty and treachery this cruelty was not to be forgiven. Among many dark crimes that passed unsuspected or unrevengeed this crime was not to remain concealed or unavenged. No one, unless it was Mary, had been concerned with the unappeased blood of David Rizzio, but Henry Stewart's restless ghost cried to Heaven and was answered.

His murder blasted his wife and all who had a hand in it as surely as the gunpowder turned into "dross" the stones of his house.

The young King resembles one of those characters in an Elizabethan tragedy, slain early in the action, but leaving behind a potent ghost that haunts all the following scenes, clamours to the skies for vengeance, and finally drives to the axe, the rope, murder, or suicide, all his murderers.

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From the first an insistent clamour that she should at once

avenge her husband made itself heard around the harassed Queen. It is incredible that, had she been innocent, she would not have wished, in a fury of remorse and grief, to do this herself. It has been argued, and perhaps with reason, that she was helpless in the hands of the Lords, that she must have known that many, if not all of these, including the powerful Maitland and Moray, who had at least "looked through their fingers", had been implicated in the murder, and that she dare not even begin to bring them to book.

She had indeed got herself into such a position that it is difficult to see how she could have acted to bring, through the ordinary course of law, the murderers to justice. But, as a high-spirited courageous woman of wit and resource, she could have acted in such a way as to show her horror and disgust of the crime and her genuine desire for the punishment of the criminals. She could have shut herself up in the Castle with her child, under the custody of Lord Mar, who was, at least for those times, a moderate and an honourable man. She could have associated herself with Lennox and his faction in their demands for revenge.

She could, as she had done before when it had been a question of traitors and rebels against her own authority, have raised her standard and summoned all her loyal Lords and people to rise against the murderers, and she could have named openly and distinctly those whom she suspected. If she had been entirely innocent, if she had known nothing whatever of the plot, if she had been sincerely moved by horror and pity, why should she not have done one of these things? Even if we disregard all gossip as to her sports and games at Seton, her close companionship with Bothwell, her feigned mourning, this fact is undeniable, she made no effort to avenge her husband and none to dissociate herself from those whom everyone from the first suspected of at least complicity in his murder.

There was a formal proclamation of reward of two thousand pounds, a free pardon, and a yearly rental to anyone who should disclose the crime, but nothing more.

From the first Earl Bothwell was suspected, and the people were not long in voicing their suspicion; was this because he had been too careless to conceal his complicity, or because he was known to be the Queen's lover?

Two days after the murder, bills denouncing him were found posted on the Tolbooth Prison. No notice was taken of these

placards; they increased in number; and others, some of which glanced directly at the Queen as one of Bothwell's accomplices in the murder Band, were found attached to the Market Cross, and even to the walls of Holyrood House. Portraits of Bothwell were scattered in Edinburgh streets inscribed: "Here is the murderer of the King." Ballads and lampoons described him as "bloody Bothwell".

The Earl received the challenge with his usual flaunting arrogance and with a fearlessness that would have been more admirable had he not had fifty armed followers behind him when he rode through Edinburgh. He boasted in ferocious language that if he knew who had inspired the bills "he would wash his hands in their blood".

According to Sir William Drury, Earl Bothwell had the air of overawing the capital. A large guard of armed retainers, probably ruffians from Liddesdale and the Border, pirates and cattle thieves, followed him wherever he went. It is said that these amounted to five hundred persons. Bothwell's strange countenance, and the way he kept his hand on his dagger when speaking to anyone of whom he was not sure, was much commented on; he soon found his crime had been too recklessly undertaken.

The Spanish Ambassador, Guzman, wrote in one of his dispatches home that grave suspicion attached to Bothwell, but no one dared say anything because of his influence and strength.

During February a correspondence passed between the Earl of Lennox and Mary. There was nothing very admirable in Mathew Stewart, Earl of Lennox; he seems to have been an ambitious, time-serving, violent man, yet there can be no doubt of his grief and sincerity when he urged that the murderers of his son should be brought to justice. He had every reason to be bitterly outraged that his son had been lured from his care in Glasgow to meet so horrible an end in the midst of his enemies. His letters make a favourable impression, they are firm and manly in tone, though couched in the most respectful terms towards Mary. His wife, Margaret Lennox, had had the news of her son's death while in the Tower, where Queen Elizabeth had sent her when her husband and son had refused to return to London; this lady had received only a prison as her share of the family grandeur. Elizabeth showed considerable humanity on this occasion, sending people to break gently the ghastly tale

to the unhappy woman and releasing her that she might indulge her grief in comfort, at least. This was considered a very gracious act and made a good impression. The Countess of Lennox, whatever her faults, and however injudiciously she had bred her son, had lavished care and pains on him, and the shock of this murder threw her into a passion of sorrow; here was a genuine agony that contrasts with the feigned distress of Mary.

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Lennox probably knew when he was writing his urgent letters to his daughter-in-law that he would never receive redress for this bitter wrong. Mary's replies were adroit and evasive. "She is", she declares, "as anxious as her father-in-law to secure revenge for the King's cruel slaughter", but she puts him off point by point in every expedient he suggests for the seizing and convicting of the criminals. When he urged, humbly enough, that she should have arrested the people whose names had been displayed on the placards in Edinburgh, she replied that "there are so many of these, they are so different and contrary one to another, that she knows not how to proceed", but she adds that "if he can mention any whom he would like action taken against she will do so".

To this Lennox replied that he marvelled (and no doubt the lines were written in bitter irony) that the names on the tickets and placards had not come to Her Majesty's ears. He declares that the names of persons so openly talked of are Bothwell, James Balfour, David Chalmers (the supposed pander of the Exchequer House scandals), and Black John Spens, together with those of several underlings, among which was that of Giuseppe, Rizzio's young brother, Mary's foreign secretary. Lennox adds that he himself suspects these people.

In reply, Mary, still evasive, said that she would bring to trial the people mentioned by Lennox. Her hand was perhaps forced. She had received from France a severe letter from Catherine de' Medici in which that lady, with a pointedness that Mary could have ill-relished, declares that "if she performed not her promise to have the death of the King revenged to clear herself, they (the Valois) would not only think her dishonoured, but would be her enemies".

On March 11th, 1569, the faithful Archbishop Beaton was writing a warning letter to Mary which in its tone of mingled distress, reproach, and uneasy championship, reminds us of

those that Nicholas Throckmorton wrote to Secretary Cecil on the occasion of the Amy Robsart scandals.

The murder of the King of Scotland had caused a profound sensation in France—"the horrible, mischievous and strange enterprise and execution done against the King's Majesty," writes Beaton, "who by craft of men has so violently been shortened of his days. Of this deed, if I would write all that is spoken here, namely of the miserable estate of that realm, and also in England, by the dishonour of the nobility, distrust and treason of your whole subjects, yea, than that you yourself are greatly and wrongly calumniated to be the motive principal of the whole of it, and that all was done by your command, I can conclude nothing by that Your Majesty writes to me yourself, and that since it has pleased God to preserve you, take a rigorous vengeance thereof, that rather than it be not actually taken it appears to me better in this world that you had lost life and all."

This was plain speaking indeed. The Archbishop considered the Queen ruined unless she was able, at the last minute, rather desperately to clear herself by a summary proceeding against the suspected murderers of her husband: "it appears to me better in this world that you had lost life and all." He spoke truly. It surely had been better for Mary if she had died with Henry Stewart. Candour and nobility, both rare qualities in these times, show in the Archbishop's long letter of entreaty to the Queen, to whom he was sincerely attached, to clear herself utterly of these horrible charges.

She required, as he said, "great virtue, magnanimity, and constancy, to overcome this most heavy envy and displeasure". She was to do herself justice in such a way that the whole world might see her innocent and "give the blame where it is due, to those traitors who, without fear of God or man, have committed so cruel and ungodly a murder".

There was so much evil spoken, he said (meaning, it is to be presumed, at the Court of France), that it was too odious for him to repeat. He adds, however, on a note of lamentation, that Mary's affairs were being interpreted in the most sinister light all over Europe, and a prophecy, that was to be sternly fulfilled, that unless Mary by some bold action could extricate herself from the ugly circumstances of her position, "I fear this is only the beginning and first act of the tragedy where all shall run from evil to worse."

Here is an estimate of Mary's conduct from her fervent

friend and champion, and a loyal honourable man. This letter makes it clear that the Queen's excuses that the plot was against her also, had not impressed either Archbishop Beaton or the French Court.

If Mary had not already had the worst of reputations would her kinsfolk and co-religionists in France and Europe been so ready to believe that she was "the motive principal of the whole of it"? If she had been innocent would not such a warning as this, coming from such a source, have animated her into the most frantic efforts to clear herself?

That she did not do so, but continued on her infatuate course, is surely proof enough that she was too deeply involved with Bothwell for any warning to be of service to her; she acted as if no consideration was anything to her beside the necessity of marrying this man. And this, as was already openly noised abroad, was probably the truth of the luckless woman's situation.

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Mary's wisest counsellors, her half-brother and Maitland of Lethington, had now fallen into the background. Moray went abroad, persistent to his policy of keeping out of the way of trouble, and fearing the ascendancy of his old enemy, Bothwell. Lethington, whose conduct was obscure, and is still a matter of dispute, remained with Mary though powerless to interfere in her affairs. He did this either out of loyalty and a forlorn hope of saving her from herself, or because he was acting a treacherous part and wished to bring her swiftly to her doom.

He had signed the Band against the King but he may not have known that murder was intended nor have had any direct hand in the crime. He loathed Bothwell, and Bothwell loathed him. Maitland, this subtle, elegant, adroit man, the wisest head in Scotland and one of the wisest in Europe, newly married to Mary Fleming, remained silent in the Queen's train and watched her tragedy unfold, and we do not know if he was endeavouring to avert it or to help it forward.

Mary, innocent or guilty, had been warned by Beaton, by Catherine de' Medici, by Elizabeth, and by her Protestant subjects who, in April, put forward a petition in which they stated their own grievances, demanded redress for them, and claimed justice on the murderers of the King. "Bothwell was all" as the saying went, and it was firmly believed by many, perhaps by most, that the ill famed Earl had bewitched the

wanton Queen. There was talk of amulets and potions, magic charms and "sweet waters"—to these people sorcery was as definite a fact as the murder itself. Scotland was gloomy with portents and prophecies of blood and woe.

Many of these sinister tales must have come to the Queen's ears. It was reported that a vague, nebulous figure had run about the streets of Edinburgh on the night of the murder and had awoken, one after another, with a blow, four of Atholl's men, as a warning perhaps to this honourable nobleman to go out and prevent the crime. A dying man had had a glimpse, in a vision, of the murderer; these stories of shuddering horror were repeated from mouth to mouth and helped to inflame the popular imagination. A nameless servant, who had broken down under his guilty knowledge, and had begun to make hysterical denunciations against the masters who had employed him in this bloody deed, was murdered and buried secretly. A voice had been heard in the midnight streets crying to Heaven for "vengeance" for the young King.

Mary may have been depressed by these wild tales and black rumours, or she may have turned them away with a laugh and a shrug. She does not seem to have been either imaginative or superstitious, and in this instance she probably was too deeply pledged to disaster to listen even to warnings from another world.

She flaunted her friendship for Bothwell, the man at whom all fingers pointed as the murderer; in every possible way she showed him favours, giving him of her utmost; not satisfied with the usual grants of money and land which she lavished on him, poor as she was, she even presented him, a Protestant who would not go to Mass, though thought to be of "no religion", with rich Church vestments, cloth of gold and cloth of silver, costly satin and silks.

This being known it is not perhaps necessary to reject Lennox's accusation that she enriched Bothwell with the horses, armour, and clothes of the murdered man—an ugly detail but one not inconsistent with the general trend of her behaviour at this time.

Her reputation sank daily lower among her people. James Murray of Tullibardine, openly drew caricatures of the Queen and Bothwell. For this he was forced to flee to England, but, boldly beseeching Elizabeth's favour, offered "to charge as many as were in the Court as were the devisers of this cruel murder,

and with five or six with him, to fight them in single combat wither armed or naked".

Ignoring this, the Council arranged for Bothwell's trial on April 12th. It must be remembered that the accused Earl himself was a member of this body and that all the other members were probably in awe of him.

By this time Drury was writing to England that, in the judgment of the people "the Queen will marry Bothwell, and that the Earl of Huntly had condescended to the divorce of his sister". The Chief of the Gordons, in his eagerness to be reinstated in the estates and power of his ruined father, was as willing to divorce his sister from Bothwell as he had been to marry her to him. We do not know if Jane Gordon was a voluntary sacrifice to her brother's ambition; some say she had come to love the irresistible seducer of women during the brief months of their marriage, others that she had always been true to her early love, Ogilvy of Boyne, whom she married finally and lived with peacefully, long after all the other actors in these events were in their graves.

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Lennox, desperate, and seeing only too clearly the result of this farcical trial, appealed to Elizabeth.

Mary also had written to the Queen of England a letter of her usual self-justification and lamentation over her troubles, begging that the Queen of England would not allow her to be slandered in her country, and referring to her present grief for her husband, which was greatly increased at the desire of the wicked people to throw the blame of this bad act upon her.

In such an atmosphere of bitter roused passion, of charge and counter-charge, of inflamed tempers and nervous tension, the mock trial of Earl Bothwell took place.

Lennox, who had behaved with great determination and courage, was proceeding to Edinburgh with about three thousand retainers (a large number, if correct, showing the power of the Lennox Stewarts) when he either fell ill, which is not unreasonable to suppose, or he feigned illness because he had been told that he would not be allowed into Edinburgh with more than six in his company. At Stirling, on the 11th of April, the day before that fixed for the trial, he wrote a desperate appeal to Mary to defer the matter.

Elizabeth had replied at once to his entreaties for help and

comfort and sent post-haste a letter in French to Mary, in which she also begged her to put off Bothwell's trial. Difficult and cunning as Elizabeth so often was, this letter reads as if written with sincere intent. There is much nobility in it and it contains good advice expressed in generous and dignified language. It is dated from Westminster, April 8th, 1567.

"MADAME,

I should not have been so inconsiderate as to trouble you with this letter had it not been that the bond of charity towards the ruined and the prayers of the miserable constrained me.

"I understand that a proclamation has been issued by you, madame, that the trial of those suspected of being concerned in the murder of your late husband and my late cousin, would take place on the twelfth of this month. This is a thing which it is most necessary should not be hidden in mystery or craftiness, which in such a case might happen, and the father and friends of the dead gentleman have humbly requested that I should pray you to postpone the date because they are aware that these iniquitous persons are contriving to do by violence what they could not do normally. Therefore I cannot do otherwise, for the love of you, whom it touches most and for the consolation of the innocent, than exhort you to grant this request which, if it be denied, will turn suspicion largely on you.

"For the love of God, madame, use such sincerity and prudence in this matter which touches you so nearly that all the world may feel justified in believing you innocent of so enormous a crime, which, if you were not, would be good cause for degrading you from the rank of princess and bringing upon you the scorn of the vulgar. Sooner than that should befall you I would wish you an honourable grave rather than a dishonoured life.

"You see, madame, I treat you as my daughter and assure you that if I had one, I would wish for her nothing better than I desire for you, as our Lord God may bear witness, and to Whom I pray with all my heart that He will inspire you to do what will be most to your honour and to the consolation of your friends.

"With my very cordial recommendation as to the one for whom one wishes the greatest good that may be possible in this world."

This letter, which repeats the warning of Archbishop Beaton that if Mary could not clear herself she had better be dead, might have given the Queen pause, though it seems unlikely that it would have done so so set was she on her headlong course to destruction, if she had received it in time.

The messenger, however, who did the journey to Edinburgh from Westminster in three days, arriving on the 11th of April at ten of the clock, could not get the Queen of England's message delivered into Mary's hands. Sir William Drury, Marshal and Deputy Governor of Berwick, then in Edinburgh, entrusted the precious document to the Provost Marshal who, on going to Holyrood, was told that the Queen was asleep and could not see him. After he had hung about the Abbey for several hours a messenger came from Bothwell, bidding him "to retire to his ease". And after receiving sundry insults "for bringing the English villain that sought to procure the stay of the trial" which shows that the contents of Queen Elizabeth's letter were known, the Provost forced his way to Lethington, who told him the Queen still slept.

There was a whole troop of lords and gentlemen on horseback waiting for Bothwell, about four thousand, some said, and the letter was delivered finally into Bothwell's hands, but no answer was sent out. It is probable that Mary never saw the letter. Bothwell then passed, according to Sir William Drury, "with a merry and lusty cheer attended on with all the soldiers, being two hundred, all harquebusiers to the Tolbooth".

Another account shows us Bothwell as looking "sad and dejected". Whether his demeanour was ruffling or gloomy, he arrived with sufficient armed men to secure a judgment in his favour.

It was usual in Scotch trials—Assizes, as they were termed—for the verdict to go to accuser or defender according as one or the other had the larger force. These travesties of justice seem to have partaken more of the nature of the old trial by combat than that of any legal procedure. Drury says that on this occasion the door was kept so that none but those that were on Bothwell's side might enter.

The curious tribunal sat from between ten and eleven in the morning till seven in the afternoon.

Bothwell was formally acquitted of any complicity in the murder of the King. Among his judges was Huntly, his brother-in-law and fellow criminal.

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By the sixteenth of the month, that is, four days after the trial, Moray was in England giving Elizabeth a first-hand account of the whole gloomy affair. It was noted the Queen wept her usual facile tears on parting from her half-brother.

She seems even in the midst of her wildest follies to have had some regard for this able man. Perhaps she had some hidden realization that he and he only had held her fortunes stable, perhaps there was some queer affection between them.

Mary gave him a licence to travel in Italy and "see Milan and Venice", but he told Elizabeth frankly, however, that it was not so much that he desired to see the curiosities of foreign countries, but dread of Bothwell "who might be the means of something unpleasant befalling him", since the dangerous Earl had over four thousand men at his disposal, besides the forts at Edinburgh and Dunbar where "the whole of the artillery and ammunitions are". This talk of Moray's is according to what gossip Guzman de Silva could pick up in London.

Moray, however, told the Spanish Ambassador directly that he did not intend to return to Scotland until the Queen had revenged the murder of her husband, adding that he thought it was unworthy of his position to remain in a country where so strange and extraordinary a crime went unpunished. He said that he thought over thirty or forty persons were concerned, that the house where the King was killed was entirely undermined, which could not have been done by one man, and he glanced at Bothwell as the ringleader.

Moray on this occasion also told Guzman de Silva that a divorce had been arranged between Bothwell and Jane Gordon. He said that there had been no quarrels between the husband and wife during the eighteen months of their married life, that Lady Bothwell was acting at the instance of her brother, who in return for this favour was to receive the restoration of his estates at the next Parliament. Moray declared that he had heard that the real reason for the divorce was a desire that the Queen should marry Bothwell, but he added that he could not believe it, "considering the Queen's religion and her great virtue".

Guzman de Silva adds on his own that "it seems most improbable, she being a Catholic as she is".

Moray seems, in this interview, to have put as good face as possible on his sister's affairs, though what colour he gave to his own exile and the ascendancy of the man suspected of the King's murder does not appear. He was patient and prudent; he had had his lesson in rebellion and he withdrew on his foreign travels leaving Mary to that disaster from which,

then, none could have saved her; no doubt he expected soon to be recalled to Scotland.

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Earl Bothwell had triumphed. Easily acquitted of any suspicion of complicity in the murder, he placarded Edinburgh arrogantly with challenges to anyone who dared to say he had been concerned in the King's death, offering to meet such a traducer in single combat, "where he should be taught the truth".

The Earl was fond of this challenging to single combat, but his defiance does not seem ever to have been accepted. This looks as if he placed a justified reliance on his strength or skill and that his physical prowess, if not his character, was greatly respected; he was probably "a mighty man of valour".

The Parliament which met immediately after the trial, presented him with the Castle at Dunbar for his great and manifold services. Huntly, still his brother-in-law, received back the title and estates which had been forfeit since the day when the Cock of the North fell dead from his horse at Corrichie. Morton was also restored to his titles and estates, but these unpopular proceedings were balanced by a Statute in which the Reformed Church was officially recognized. This, however, did not prevent the smouldering resentment of the people being lashed to fury by the acquittal of Bothwell and the honours showered on him. Knox had retired from the fray to write his partisan "History of the Reformation", but several vehement Calvinists carried on his work.

It is almost incredible that Mary should not have noticed the gathering storm, and the conclusion that her situation was so desperate that nothing but marriage with Bothwell could save her even a remnant of honour is almost inevitable.

The half-crazy man who had run up and down the streets, shouting "Vengeance on those who caused me to shed innocent blood! Lord, open the Heavens and pour down vengeance on me and those that have destroyed the innocent!" had been discovered and seized, and, according to Drury, shut up in a prison "which they call, for the loathsomeness of the place, the 'foul thieves' pit'"—"pit" being the Scots for prison.

Earl Bothwell, now completely sure of himself, and also sure of Mary, gave a supper-party in Ainslie's Tavern on the day of his "cleansing" in Parliament. All the nobles there present, and they included most of the proud names of Scot-

land—Argyll, Huntly, Cassilis, Morton, Sutherland, Ross, Glencairn, Caithness, and many others, signed a Band to side with Bothwell against all his enemies and to set forward his marriage with the Queen. It is not known whether he obtained this document by cajolery or by threats. One tale is that his armed retainers surrounded the tavern and that the signatures were obtained by force. We are told, however, "that Lord Eglinton subscribed not, but slipped away". This supper-party at Ainslie's Tavern and the question as to who was actually there, and who signed the Bond is one of the many obscure and disputed episodes of this sordid story.

In sum, it is not known precisely who was present nor who signed the Bond, nor indeed is it of much importance; there was some such party and some such signing, and for the moment Bothwell was supreme, or believed he was. Probably the Lords, who had found him so convenient in removing the King, were already deciding on his ruin.

The wildest stories were circulated about Mary; shortly after the famous supper-party at Ainslie's Tavern she had ridden to Stirling to see the Prince, who was there in the keeping of Mar. Some say her intention was to place him in Bothwell's charge, but that Mar would not surrender James to his mother, and another story sent by Drury to Cecil, relates the wild anecdote that Mary had tried to poison the child in an apple and in a sugar-loaf; these crude slanders are repeated by Lennox.

Kirkcaldy of Grange, a Scotsman in the English pay, was at this time sending accounts of Mary's conduct, by no means favourable to the unfortunate Queen, to Bedford, the Governor of Berwick. He may have been badly informed, he may have written out of malice, he may have invented every word he wrote, but here, as in so many other instances of disputed letters, what Kirkcaldy of Grange said is entirely consistent with the known facts of Mary's conduct.

He declares: "She was so shamefully enamoured of Bothwell that she had been heard to say she cared not to lose France, England, and her country for him, and will go with him to the world's end in a white petticoat rather than lose him. Whatever is dishonest reigns presently at Court."

Kirkcaldy about this time wrote to Bedford a remarkable piece of news. He said that not only was Bothwell's divorce being put through, and not only had the Lords agreed to the

marriage between the Earl and the Queen but that a false abduction had been arranged between him and Mary, which was to take place on her return from Stirling on the 24th of April.

"Bothwell," says Kirkcaldy, "has gathered many of his friends, some say to ride in Liddesdale, but I believe it not, for he is minded to meet the Queen this day and to take her by the way and bring her to Dunbar. Judge ye if it be with her will or no."

Three of the Casket Letters, those known as Numbers 6, 7, and 8, are supposed, if genuine, to have been written from Stirling on the occasion of this visit of Mary to the young Prince. If authentic, they show that Kirkcaldy of Grange had guessed the truth, and that Mary was a party to the abduction. They are full of malice against Huntly, who was evidently suspected of treachery or double-dealing, but are not otherwise of much interest or importance. They do not speak the language of passion, or remorse, but are full of reproach, of agitation, of apprehension, and reveal an earnest and heartless desire for the success of the abduction plan.

If the letters are forgeries, Mary may have honestly been taken by surprise when, returning with a small escort from Linlithgow to Edinburgh, she was met by Bothwell with a large force of his horsemen and hurried away to Dunbar Castle. Huntly, Lethington, and Sir James Melville were the only persons of consequence in her train and they were forced away with her.

Melville, who was released from Dunbar the next day, wrote in his "Memoirs" that Bothwell was swaggering that he meant to marry Mary whether she would herself or not, that she could not help herself, seeing that she was hopelessly compromised, if not actually violated. At the same time Sir James Melville declares in these same "Memoirs" that the follower of Bothwell who took him prisoner whispered to him that it was all a farce, done with the Queen's own consent. He is explicit enough about the fact that even if Mary had not been Bothwell's mistress before, she was then; Bothwell had "ravished her and lain with her against her will".

If this was so, and Bothwell was obviously capable of doing this to achieve his marriage with the Queen, Mary had been playing with fire and was burnt, owing entirely to conduct that disposes of any claim she might have had not only to

prudence or wisdom but to common sense, first, in the encouraging of a man like Bothwell, secondly, in travelling with a small escort and going with her captor under the puerile excuse of " saving bloodshed " (which she is supposed to have made) instead of at once resisting and protesting against the outrage.

The sordid tale that Melville relates (for, if it be true, Bothwell had not even Tarquin's excuse, he acted through ambition not an overwhelming passion) is not, under the circumstances, likely.

If Mary's relations with Bothwell had been, till the Dunbar episode, platonic, why the divorce, mooted before this, why the rumours of the abduction that had come to the ears of Kirkcaldy?

The logical sequence seems to be that Mary, for some time Bothwell's mistress, was forced to cast about for some excuse for a hasty marriage, such as a sham abduction gave.

Whatever the truth of this bold move, it played into the hands of the Lords; they had now a good excuse for disposing of their rash cat's paw, Bothwell, and for disgracing the Queen.

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Kirkcaldy of Grange had no doubts in his mind about the truth when he wrote to Bedford on the 26th of April : " This Queen will never cease till she has wrecked all the honest men of this realm. She was minded to cause Bothwell to ravish her to the end that she may sooner gain the marriage which she promised before she caused the murder of her husband. Many would revenge this, but they fear your mistress."

Kirkcaldy adds that he is so eager to attempt this revenge that he must either do so or leave the country, but he fears that Bothwell will have him murdered before he is able to go abroad, and " that no honest man was safe in Scotland under the rule of a murderer and a murderess ". He believed that Mary was scheming to get her son out of Mar's hands and put him " in his (hands) that murdered his father ".

Guzman de Silva, the Spanish Ambassador in London, gathered up what details he could of this sensational affair to send to his master. Not only did he hear the news from Secretary Cecil but directly from the messenger who brought it to London, " a good Catholic and an intimate acquaintance of mine ". This gentleman had heard that Mary had been stopped six miles from Edinburgh by Bothwell, who was followed only by four hundred men (in some accounts Both-

well's force is fifteen hundred), and that some of her escort showed fight and she said that she would prefer to go with Bothwell rather than to cause bloodshed. She arrived at Dunbar Castle at midnight. Guzman thought, following the opinion of many, that she would marry Bothwell, "both because of the favour the Queen had shown him, and because he has the national forces in his hand. The Queen sent secretly to the Governor of the town of Dunbar to sally out with his troops and rescue her, yet it is believed that the whole thing had been arranged, so that if anything comes of the marriage, the Queen can make out that she was forced into it."

Elizabeth, adds Guzman, was greatly scandalized. She must, indeed, have heard of this strange business of the abduction with mixed feelings; she could not have had any objection to the discrediting of this powerful candidate for the English throne, the princess who was the rallying point and focus of all the English Roman Catholics, but she had a strong caste feeling and detested the thought of fallen royalty.

Lennox had been allowed to rejoin his wife in London, and no doubt he regaled Elizabeth's not-unwilling ear with bitter tales against his daughter-in-law, both as to the murder of the King, the trial of Bothwell, and her general conduct. If he related to Elizabeth half of what he gathered together afterwards into the collection known as the Lennox Manuscripts, he must have left the Queen of Scotland without a shred of reputation, dignity, or decency.

In common with the rest of Europe Elizabeth seems to have considered the murder of Henry Stewart a shameful crime, forgetful of the very thin ice she had skated on at the time of the death of Amy Robsart. She told the Spanish Ambassador that she very much deplored the Queen of Scotland's conduct, and she assured the outraged parents that she would help them to avenge their son. At the same time she was eager to make it clear that she would not encourage any rebellious attempts against the person or the throne of the Queen of Scotland, Elizabeth had an extremely high idea of the Divine Right of Kings, and she was prepared to endure much rather than this should be violated. Mary, as a woman, might be everything that was deplorable, but Mary as a Queen was a sacred personage.

How Elizabeth squared this point of view with her own previous meddles with Mary's affairs and encouragement of those rebelling against her, it is difficult to see. Probably she

did not mind making trouble in another Sovereign's realm, but drew the line at an actual revolution.

What was Mary's conduct and her thoughts while her behaviour, her circumstances, and her destiny were being thus commented on and gossiped about throughout Europe? She had disappeared behind the stout walls of Dunbar Castle and remained closed there with Earl Bothwell and his people. She had with her those of her attendants who had been riding with her from Linlithgow to Edinburgh, and Sir William Maitland. Perhaps he was sequestered in a distant part of the Castle from the apartments of the Queen and knew nothing of what happened, perhaps he could have said much. Throughout his life and after his death, an enigma, this wise statesman never related anything of what passed in Dunbar Castle.

Either the belief that the abduction was a pre-arranged affair between the Queen and Bothwell was very wide-spread, or Mary had few friends left in Scotland, for there was no attempt to rescue her and no protest made against her seizure, save from the city of Aberdeen, who, on the twenty-seventh of April, sent a gallant letter to the Queen declaring that they were at her service to revenge her ravishment by the Earl of Bothwell. It is not known whether Mary received this letter or sent an answer.

Mary remained eight days enclosed in the stronghold of Dunbar and meanwhile much bitter material was given to her enemies by the knowledge that the divorce of Bothwell was being hurried through the Civil and Ecclesiastical Courts.

There was much that was strange and even irregular about these proceedings. The Archbishop of St. Andrews, he who was supposed to have had a hand in the murder of the young King, put through the divorce for the Roman Catholics by virtue of the restoration of his consistory powers, the only act he performed under this authority, which was soon taken away again.

This fact certainly looks as if the divorce had been for some while contemplated, and as if there was a passionate desire to hasten the marriage. To have sent to Rome for the authority would have meant months of delay, if it had been granted, and Mary and Bothwell must have both known that it would have been most unlikely to have been granted.

The Archbishop dissolved the marriage on the grounds that

it had always been null for lack of a dispensation. This, however, had been duly sent, and from the Roman Catholic point of view, the divorce might be termed illegal since it was based on false premises. From the Protestant authorities the divorce was granted on the wife's plea of her husband's infidelity with a maidservant.

We do not know if Jane Gordon was a passive instrument in the hands of her ambitious brother or if she was glad to be rid of Bothwell. She is a masked figure, all we know of her are a few doubtful details, that she was careless in her dressing and that she could write fashionable literary love letters and poems which fascinated Bothwell, as we learn from the Sonnets of disputed authorship which were found with the Casket Letters.

If we may believe these poems and letters, she was Mary's serious rival in Bothwell's fickle affections, and this inscrutable daughter of the dead and ruined Gordon of whose mind and appearance we know nothing, a Scots girl of twenty who had never left her native country, was preferred by Bothwell, experienced in amorous affairs, to the most fascinating and brilliant princess in the world. This, at least, was the general opinion; there are many facts to support it; if it be true Corrichie was revenged on Mary Stewart.

It is likely that Jane Gordon always regarded herself as Bothwell's wife and took the divorce to be a mere farce for she preserved the dispensation which permitted her marriage, although on the supposed lack of this her divorce had been grounded. The wilder slanders against Mary and Bothwell hint at schemes to poison Jane Gordon, but she was got rid of by at least above-board means and handsomely compensated by the gift of valuable estates which were still in her possession when she died in the reign of Mary's grandson, Charles I.

On the third of May, Mary entered her staring capital in state with Bothwell beside her, as some say, leading her by the bridle of her horse. She must have been the focus of many curious eyes, of many menacing glances. Her position was extremely perilous, the Lords were already gathering at Stirling, among them was the Black Douglas, Morton, the Earl of Mar, who was the guardian of the young Prince, and that Laird of Tullibardine who had wished to avenge the King in a personal combat with Bothwell.

These Lords took the tone that the Queen had been "forcibly ravished and detained against her will by Bothwell, and they were determined to set her at liberty, which they could not deem her to be while she was in the Earl's company".

Robert Melville, writing to Sir William Cecil the day of Mary's state entry into Edinburgh, said that she had asked help of Edinburgh but not obtained it.

However this may be, Mary came without protest, lamentation, or any outward show of distress in Bothwell's company to Holyrood. Her conduct on this occasion, and indeed, on every occasion when she made a public appearance after she left Dunbar, can only be explained by admitting her acquiescence in the abduction, or by supposing that this woman of wit and courage, royal breed, and passions, had become passive to the point of imbecility. If, as some of her defenders aver, she loathed and detested Bothwell, and had always done so, and he had overawed and forced her into submitting to his atrocious schemes, she would surely have found some way of outwitting him and of making a public and desperate appeal for help, which assuredly she would have received.

Soon after the Queen's return to Holyrood, Earl Bothwell ordered John Craig, the preacher who had taken John Knox' place in Edinburgh, to publish the banns of his marriage with Mary. John Knox had fled from Edinburgh after the Kirk o' Field murder; he evidently did not greatly trust to his ancient friendship with Bothwell and feared that with the ascendancy of the Queen's party he would be in considerable peril.

His mantle, however, had fallen on to the shoulders of this worthy John Craig, who resisted Bothwell's demands with unflinching courage, inspired no doubt not only by his own intense convictions, but by the feeling that the great majority of the country was behind him. The preacher defied the Earl and refused to proclaim the banns.

Here, surely, was Mary's chance to state her grievances and demand assistance. But she did not do so; she sent a letter to Craig declaring that she was "neither ravished nor yet retained in captivity", and ordering him to proclaim the banns.

Craig could no longer refuse, but, on giving notice of the approaching marriage he called upon his God to witness that he did so unwillingly and that he abhorred and loathed the odious union. He was brought before the Privy Council for

this insubordination, and there, losing nothing of his courage, the fiery Protestant threw in the teeth of Bothwell all the hideous charges against him, which were being muttered and whispered in Edinburgh. He accused him openly of murdering the King, ravishing the Queen, and illegally divorcing his innocent wife.

Earl Bothwell does not seem to have resented this plain speaking, or did not dare to show open wrath. He endeavoured to answer the charges; the grim Protestant, however, declared that "he (Bothwell) said nothing to my satisfaction".

The Lords, gathering strength at Stirling, had now, according to Drury, decided to crown the young Prince if Bothwell should marry the Queen. It must be remembered that many of these same Lords had themselves subscribed the Bond in Ainslie's Tavern by which they agreed to help Bothwell to that very marriage they now declared they would do all in their power to prevent. The explanation of this conduct must be either that Bothwell forced the signature out of them, or that they, by a piece of elaborate treachery, intended to be rid of both the Queen and Bothwell by luring them on to a marriage which would ruin both and give them, the Lords, a fair excuse for a revolution.

They sent to the Queen, warning her to be careful in her conduct. She replied in that evasive style which she so often employed. Here again was surely a chance for her to have appealed for help, to have denounced Bothwell, and to have stated how grievously she had been wronged in the abduction. Instead of this, she admitted she had been "evil and strangely handled, but treated so well since that she had no cause to complain"; she asked the Lords to quiet themselves.

Far from doing this they sent her another message which, though addressed to her, was obviously meant for Bothwell, that unless she discharged her soldiers and got more reputable members of the nobility about her, they would not obey her in anything she might command.

The Lords then formed themselves into one of the Bands then so popular in Scotland, their objects being, as they declared, first, to seek the Queen's liberty "who is ravished and detained by Bothwell who has all the strength, munitions, and men-of-war at his command", second, the preservation of the Prince, and third, to pursue the King's murderers. They were especially bitter against "that cruel murderer, Bothwell", who, it should

be remembered, had been recently acquitted of the crime with which he was now openly and generally charged.

It should be noted that the title of "Keeper of Dunbar Castle", given by Mary to Bothwell, was not that of a sinecure. This was the mightiest fortalice in Scotland, and the arsenal for the entire Kingdom, where nearly all the national stock of gunpowder was stored.

The Lords declared that Bothwell wished to poison the Prince and get the entire kingdom into his hands, and that they were looking with what vigilance and prudence they could command, for aid, either from France or England. Du Croc, who had been sent from France to inquire into the confused affairs of Scotland, offered his master's aid to suppress Bothwell and his faction. Kirkcaldy of Grange wrote to the Earl of Bedford appealing for help from England.

Bothwell had either been from the first outwitted by the Lords and they had been working for his downfall since before the King's murder, or he had gone too far in his violent ambition and alienated them all. Whatever the case, the country was up. Argyll had ridden to rouse the West, Atholl had the same mission in the North, Morton had gone to Fife, Angus and the Earl of Mar kept a strict and valiant guardianship over the young Prince.

Du Croc warned the Queen that if she were to marry Bothwell she would have no friendship nor favour from France. Here again Mary, if she were being forced against her will, had an opportunity to say so, but Kirkcaldy of Grange reported to Bedford that "the Queen will give no care to the French Ambassador's warning".

That this was indeed her attitude was proved by the fact that Du Croc wished to leave her and attach himself as representative of the King of France to the young Prince, then under Mar's charge at Stirling. That is to say Du Croc thought the situation so serious that he was justified in regarding Mary as no longer Queen of Scotland.

Bothwell, no doubt well aware of the feeling against him and the forces he had to face but who was at the least, a man who never showed any fear nor hesitancy, withdrew the Queen into Edinburgh Castle. He had considerable levies of horse and foot, but was much pushed for money. In this extremity the Queen melted down the golden font that Elizabeth had given for the christening. This coined into five thousand

crowns; the jewels were no doubt sold. More money was, as Kirkcaldy of Grange puts it, "reft and borrowed from Edinburgh and the men of Lothian", an extortion that must have increased Bothwell's unpopularity.

Cartels and challenges passed between Bothwell and several of the Lords. But these offers "to prove the King's murder on Bothwell's person", came, as usual, to nothing. What possible fortunate outcome to herself could Mary have hoped from these dreadful events, from this gathering storm of reproaches, menaces, rebellion, insults? Her strength seems the obstinacy of despair—she could not turn back, the marriage was to save what she termed her honour, and must take place.

On the 12th of May she created Bothwell Duke of Orkney, doing him the favour to place the coronet on his head herself.

Four of Bothwell's men, one of whom was afterwards executed for the murder of the King, were knighted on the day that their leader was made Duke of Orkney—James Cockburn of Langton, Alexander Hepburn of Benston, Patrick Whitelaw, and James Ormiston.

From what little we can hear of her at this time, it seems that she was most unhappy. Bothwell was furiously jealous and would scarcely allow her "to look at man or woman". This was not, however, it would seem, the result of a passionate affection, but rather the mistrust of a man who knows he is dealing with a capricious, dishonest woman. Bothwell, perhaps, feared to be deceived as Henry Stewart had been deceived and to meet the same fate. That it could not have been love of Mary that inspired his jealousy is proved by the fact that he insulted her by keeping his wife at Crichton Castle, a fact that the Queen "much disliked", according to Drury.

On May 15th, the marriage of Mary to her third husband took place in the Chapel of Holyrood Palace, the place that had seen her second nuptials solemnized; close to the grave of Henry Stewart, murdered two months previously, and perhaps to that of David Rizzio.

A picturesque legend says that after these gloomy nuptials a tag from Ovid was found chalked on the walls of Holyrood: "*Mense maio malas nubere vulgus ait.*" A superstition against May weddings is said by some writers to linger still in Scotland and to date from the union of Mary and Bothwell.

Mary, on this occasion, as on that of her former nuptials, wore deep mourning. She seems herself to have regarded, in

some morbid fashion, her relations with Bothwell as sinister and melancholy. When she thought she was about to die at the birth of the Prince she left him a black ring set with a diamond, and in one of the Casket Letters, that written in the odd, affected style that was the literary idiom of the moment, she says she sent him a present of a black enamel and diamond ring (perhaps the same jewel as that left him in the will) in the form of a skull, enamelled with black tears.

The ring with which Henry Stewart had wedded her had been of the sinister hue of crimson. Perhaps it was with this gloomy symbol of death and tears that she was wedded to James Hepburn, Duke of Orkney and Earl of Bothwell.

The ceremony was according to the Protestant rites and performed by the Protestant Bishop of Orkney, Adam Bothwell, who was, however, no relative of the bridegroom. The double similarity between the names of the Duke and the Bishop has caused some confusion. No marriage could have been more ill-omened; not only was the bride in full mourning, the garb she had worn during the whole of her reign in Scotland except for the eighteen months of her former marriage, but "she was so much changed in her face" says Drury, "in so little a time, that no one has seen without extremity of sickness". If her beauty "had been other than it was" at the time of her second marriage, it would appear that now she looked like a dying creature without radiance or bloom.

There was only one noble of repute, the Earl of Crawford, at the wedding. Nor was the marriage sermon set on a cheerful note, for in it the Bishop of Orkney, who afterwards became one of Mary's official accusers, dwelt on "the penitence" of the Duke of Orkney for his past evil life. This might have been left unsaid, since everyone knew of Bothwell's past misdeeds, and everyone was aware that he was not penitent.

Mary, before her marriage, on the 11th May had gone to the Tolbooth and there openly proclaimed that she had forgiven her abduction and "had since been well used". This declaration must have sounded strangely from the lips of the woman in her heavy black weeds, with her air of extreme sickness. It should be noted that the Queen's words were very deliberate and formal and that they were spoken before a full assembly of the nobles (convened by her wish) and the Chancellor and Judges of the High Court.

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Du Croc, writing to Catherine de' Medici in a tone of sincere distress, declares "this marriage is very wretched and is already repented upon". He adds that the Queen had sent for him; no doubt she had an eager and pathetic desire to stand well with France, not only for political reasons, but because of sentimental recollections.

The acute Frenchman perceived that the unhappy Queen was already estranged from her husband. She told him that she could not help it if he saw her sad, and that she could not rejoice, since she wished for nothing but death. And he relates that Mary had had a violent fit of hysteria on her wedding day when she had been shut up in her cabinet with her husband. Those in the next room had heard her shriek and ask for a knife with which to stab herself.

Melville, who detested Bothwell, states that "my lord Duke" was drinking on the wedding day and using "such filthy language to the gentlewomen that they and I went away".

It should be remembered when considering the Memoirs of Sir James that he wrote them in old age, and from the memories of years before.

Du Croc was told, probably by her servants, that she might "become desperate", that is, commit suicide in truth. Three times Du Croc had seen her, and on each occasion he had endeavoured to give her comfort and advice, but he must have known that both were, under her circumstances, useless.

Du Croc detested Orkney and looked upon the marriage with contempt and loathing. He warned the Queen Dowager that the Bishop of Dunblane who was coming with Mary's official notification of and excuses for the marriage, was not to be regarded. "Your Majesties cannot do better than to make him (that is, the Bishop) very bad cheer and find all amiss in this marriage." The state of Mary's affairs was, Du Croc thought, most precarious. "Her husband will not remain so long, for he is too much hated in this realm as he is always considered guilty of the death of the King." Mary had summoned the nobles to assemble, and Du Croc did not think they would obey. She had implored Du Croc to speak to her nobility, if he could get them together, and try to bring them back to their allegiance in the name of the King of France.

The acute Frenchman thought this desperate course hopeless; he was prepared to say what he could, but he thought it better to withdraw and "leave them to play out their game".

And he adds, with a dignity befitting the representative of the greatest monarch in Europe, "it is not fitting that I sit there among the Lords in the name of the King of France, for if I lean to the Queen they will think in this realm and in England that my King has a hand in all that is done. Why, if it had not been for the express command Your Majesty made on me, I had departed hence eight days before this marriage took place. If I have spoken in a very high tone as it is that all this realm may be aware that I will neither mix myself up with these nuptials, nor will I recognize Bothwell as husband of the Queen."

Sir James Melville also relates the anecdote of Mary's screams for a knife when closed in her cabinet with Bothwell. He said that "her husband suffered her not to pass over a day in patience, making her cause to shed abundance of salt tears".

Mary's greatest humiliation at this time of her deep distress and anguish must have lain in the fact that the man for whom she had given everything, even the last shred of her own self-respect, continued to prefer another woman. The Spanish Ambassador in London reported to his master that "Bothwell passes some days a week with the wife he has divorced". This, whether true or not, seems to have been commonly believed, and must have been credited by Mary.

If the casket letters and sonnets are genuine, she had always been tormented by jealousy of Jane Gordon. On the other hand, there was Bothwell's grim guardianship to contend against; Maitland of Lethington, still with the Queen though without power or influence and remaining by her either out of a strange loyalty or as a traitor to spy upon her actions, reported to Du Croc that "from the day of the marriage there has been no end of Mary's tears and lamentations, that Bothwell would not allow her to look at or be looked on by anybody, for he knew very well that she loved her pleasure". She could have had little pleasure now, though after a while she rallied some show of half-hysterical high spirits.

At the end of that month of May, so dreadful for her, she out-faced her troubles and the opinion of the world by a triumph or masque; there was a pageant held on the water and her husband ran at the ring.

This was the last of Mary's "festivals or pageants", and it was not attended by any of the great nobles of Scotland. The Queen and her third husband moved in a sinister isolation, surrounded by armed men largely composed of Bothwell's Border

russians and hangs-on. While the Lords gathered strength at Stirling, Mar, Atholl and Morton roused the more distant parts of the country against the rule of "a murderer and a murderer". Even Mary's confessor had warned her against her marriage.

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Perhaps, despite this, the Queen had some moments of transient happiness. We know nothing of her mind, but Drury noted that when she and her husband rode abroad they made an outward show of great content. It is possible that she was really sometimes "content" in her gratified love for this man, that she was happy in his company and that she deluded herself with the thought that they might yet weather the storm and rule Scotland between them. However her husband might use her in private, publicly he behaved himself with courtesy and chivalry. "The Duke openly uses great reverence to the Queen," says Drury, "goes bareheaded, which it seems she would have otherwise, sometimes taking his cap and putting it on."

On the 27th of May she sent a letter to the faithful Archbishop Beaton in Paris, endeavouring to justify her amazing marriage. Had she been violently forced and utterly unwilling, surely she could have confided this to her faithful servant, but she did not do so. The letter is evasive and rambling. She admits that the event, that is, the marriage, is strange, "and otherwisc, than, we know, you would have looked for. But as it has succeeded we must make the best of it, and so for our respect must all that love us."

Nor had the Bishop of Dunblane, her special envoy to the Court of France, more satisfactory excuses to give. He could only say that Mary had done her best for the state of the country which had demanded her marriage, and that though Bothwell had been to blame for the abduction, he had atoned for this offence since, and that her own noblemen had decided he was the best husband for her when they had signed the Bond in Ainslie's Tavern.

These excuses are lamentably weak, they leave the reasons for the marriage in a state of mystery. Mary protests neither that she has been abducted and forced against her will, overpowered in every direction by Bothwell, and is in brief the victim of a violent ruffian, nor does she say that she loves the man, trusts him, and is willing to put her life and her kingdom into his keeping. The explanation is merely an evasion.

The Bishop of Dunblanc was also instructed to dwell on Mary's "inconstant and doubtful fate" and the events of a harassing and remarkable character that had befallen her. Mary frequently took this tone of lamentation against her destiny as a justification of all her own mistakes. Never did she admit herself in the wrong; she was either self-deceived into thinking herself the passive victim of an ugly destiny, as many women whose faults bring their own troubles on their heads are, or else she was putting up mere excuses to deceive others. Even in the matter of this marriage, which blasted her in the eyes of her most devoted friends, the Bishop of Dunblane was instructed to say that this ceremony, celebrated according to the Huguenot rites, was brought about rather by "destiny and necessity than by her free choice". An obscure comment that leaves the matter where it was.

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From the day of her marriage to Bothwell Mary was regarded by the potentates of Europe as dis-crowned. Innocence or guilt mattered little to most of them; she was either a woman whose passions were incorrigible and who was likely to be hurried into any crime or excess, or she was a passive puppet in the hands of a ruffian. In either case, the interest of European statesmen turned from her to the young Prince, the heir, it seemed, to the crowns both of England and Scotland. Pius V, who had been Mary's friend, even sending her considerable sums of money, decided to have no further hand in her affairs. Not only did he disapprove of her conduct, but her marriage to a heretic seemed to prove her lukewarm in her religion.

The Bishop of Mondovi,¹ formal Papal Nuncio to Edinburgh, wrote of Mary's marriage in strong terms. He called it an act "dishonourable to God and to herself" and said that it would be impossible for His Holiness to send another envoy to the Queen, unless, he adds, with a curious hope of getting good out of evil, Mary was able to convert her husband to the true Faith and use his vigour and valour to combat the Protestants in Scotland, but "one cannot expect much from one who is subject to their pleasures".

¹ Mondovi had never reached Scotland, his proposal to the Queen to murder her Protestant advisers, including Moray and Lethington, had been sent from Paris. Pius V, who had at one time wished "to spend his own blood" in Mary's service, became disgusted with her after the Bothwell marriage.

Nor was the French Court satisfied by Mary's feeble excuses. Catherine de' Medici had never liked her, and perhaps was not displeased to see her disgraced and dishonoured. There was no help to be expected from Spain. Mary was, then, abandoned by all those powers whom she might have hoped would stand her friends. Nearly the whole of her country was gathering in arms against her, and she had nothing but her husband's soldiers of fortune and the money coined from Queen Elizabeth's gift.

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The destiny of the little Prince James became of more importance to Europe than the destiny of Mary. There was a suggestion that he should be sent to his great-grandmother, Antoinette de Bourbon, who must have heard with shuddering horror of Mary's conduct. There is no trace of any message of hope, of consolation or sympathy from this austere, pious old lady to the grandchild whom she had once petted and admired and who was now so utterly forlorn. The second Duke of Guise was dead and the Cardinal his brother washed his hands of his niece's affairs, so did her cousins.

In the letter in which Guzman de Silva announces the marriage of Mary to his master, he says that Leicester came to consult him as to the advisability of James being brought up in the English Court, and there educated as heir to the Crown of England, and of course, in the Protestant Faith. We do not know Leicester's opinions of the tumultuous happenings in Scotland, but he must have congratulated himself often and fervently that he had not aspired to the hand of Mary Stewart.

In this same letter Guzman adds a simple sentence that surely is the key to the whole mysterious proceedings and the fatal marriage. He said that "the cause of the Queen of Scotland's hurry over this marriage is that she is pregnant, that the matter was arranged between them some time ago".

Although Mary had received assurances from some Catholic bishops that her marriage to Bothwell was legal because Jane Gordon had been related to him in the fourth degree, her confessor, a Dominican Monk, did not share this opinion, and, highly offended at her behaviour, left her and returned to France. Passing through London he discussed the Scotch tragedy with Guzman, to whom he swore solemnly that until the question of the marriage with Bothwell was raised he never saw a woman "of greater virtue, courage, and uprightness".

This is a noteworthy testimony in Mary's favour, but, when was the question of the marriage with Bothwell raised? This might go back before the King's murder, and the sentence might be read as meaning the Queen was an honourable woman until she fell under the influence of Earl Bothwell, which would be, according to Buchanan and Lennox, soon after the birth of the Prince.

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On the whole, Elizabeth was more friendly to Mary than was any ruler in Europe. Greatly as she affected to disapprove of Mary's conduct, she took the rather capricious attitude that the Scotch Queen's rank put her beyond criticism, and she professed herself greatly offended by one of Kirkcaldy of Grange's letters to Bedford, which used such vile terms against the Queen of Scotland that Elizabeth could not abide to hearing of it, "for", as she explained haughtily, "it made Mary worse than any common woman". She was, perhaps, thinking of herself when she insisted that no Queen should be thus criticised by one of her own subjects, whatever the provocation. She declared herself so offended by Grange's free speaking, that she condemned him "for one of the worst in the realm". At the same time, her anger against the Duke of Orkney, always the implacable enemy of England, was intense. She would very willingly have quickly disposed of him could she have laid hands on him, and this despite a diplomatic and flattering letter Mary's husband wrote her from Edinburgh on June 5th (1567).

The Duke, perhaps acting in concert with Mary, perhaps acting on his own initiative, had endeavoured to get the young Prince from Mar's safe keeping. The Loids were swelling to overwhelming numbers at Stirling and an outbreak in Scotland had become inevitable by the first week of June, when the Duke of Orkney no longer thought it tenable to remain in Edinburgh, where, evidently, public feeling was growing more and more bitter against him and his followers were falling away.

James Hepburn felt safer nearer his own glens and tenantry and he took his wife to Borthwick Castle, fourteen miles from the capital. From this refuge Mary ordered a muster of levies for the 12th, summoning all her subjects, noblemen, knights, esquires, gentlemen, and yeomen to come to Muirhead Abbey. Each was to bring six days' provisions and full armour and weapons.

The Queen was desperate for money; the pieces of three

pounds Scottish into which Elizabeth's golden font had been coined, were fast being spent; her personal plate was sent to the Mint, while "she abated some of her domestic charges, driven thereto by necessity".

Before Mary left Edinburgh, the inscrutable Lethington escaped from her train. He had remained with her since her residence in Dunbar Castle—out of respect and in the hope that he might be of some service to the fallen Queen, was his own explanation. Others think that he was there to collect evidence for her final overthrow. The man was, to the last degree, subtle, adroit, and difficult to understand; it is quite possible that he, like Moray, had been prepared to serve and respect the Queen until her love affairs rendered her impossible as a Sovereign. He may have despised and disliked her from the moment she exposed her wild passions and her feeble, womanly devices, but it seems difficult to believe that he should have remained with her in daily danger of his life from the hatred of her husband merely that he might collect material further to ruin one already completely overthrown.

Perhaps Mary implored him to stay, perhaps she clung to this one strong, reasonable, accomplished man among the wild company which surrounded her.

If we may believe Sir James Melville, it was only her intervention that prevented Lethington being slain in her chamber by Orkney, as Rizzio was slain at her feet by Henry Stewart. According to another tale it was the Earl of Huntly who would have slain Lethington, had not Mary passionately declared that "if a hair of the Secretary's head was touched, Huntly should forfeit lands, goods, and life". After these scenes Orkney kept Lethington under guard. He contrived, however, to send out letters to England and finally to make his escape to the Lords at Stirling on the day, June 6th, that Mary left Edinburgh for Borthwick Castle.

But the Lords gave him a cold welcome, thinking that he came as Mary's agent, or even spy, though Mary herself afterwards thought that he had betrayed her to her enemies. Lethington's behaviour is always mysterious and his attitude ambiguous. There is, at least, no doubt of Orkney's attitude towards him. But Maitland may have left the company of the Queen and her husband with no diplomatic designs at all but merely to save his own life, or he may even have been all along the instrument of the Lords, and their mistrust of him merely

feigned. Any of these explanations is plausible and Maitland may be blamed or defended with equal effect.

At the time of this withdrawal from the capital there was trouble also with Huntly, whom it seems Mary had never liked nor trusted, and whom she had positively hated if we may believe the Casket Letters. Perhaps her deepest grievance then was that he was Jane Gordon's brother. It was reported at this time that Huntly had desired to retire from the Queen's train and to go to the North, whereupon Mary bitterly, with many hard words, refused him permission, saying that "his design was to do as his father had done", that is to say, raise the North against her authority.

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The unfortunate Queen, whose position could hardly have been more wretched than it was, waited in vain at Borthwick Castle for the "noblemen, knights, esquires, gentlemen, and yeomen" who should repair there with their six days' victuals, their arms and armour. Few came, and those that did had no heart to fight in her cause. If she had appealed to them alone, as Queen of Scotland, as Mary Stewart, they might have all risen in her defence. The confederate Lords could scarcely have found an excuse to refuse their loyalty if she had gone over to them. It was Bothwell, as the Duke was still named, whom they would not obey nor recognise, and she would not leave nor deny Bothwell.

The Lords, by the middle of June, felt their strength consolidated and saw the hopeless position of the Duke. They marched against Borthwick Castle with a thousand men, their ostensible intention being to capture him and to free the Queen. The truth of what happened when they arrived at the stronghold where Mary was at bay is confused by several conflicting accounts.

According to one, Orkney had escaped by the time the army of the Lords arrived. According to another, they surrounded the Castle and challenged him to come out, loading him with terms of abuse as "Traitor", "Murderer", "Butcher", also using expressions against Mary "too evil and unseemly to be told", as Drury, who gives this relation, says. He adds, however, that Mary answered, and "wanting other means of defence, used her speech".

This creates an impossible picture. Could Mary, even in her desperation, be so lost to all dignity and restraint as to

exchange abuse from the Castle wall or window with her gathered nobility? Indeed, the Lords themselves, in their statement of the affair, declare that they had used all courtesy towards the Queen, and as soon as they had heard that her husband had left the Castle, withdrew to Edinburgh.

Mary, seeing Borthwick no longer surrounded, waited till nightfall, then put on masculine attire, riding boots and spurs, and escaped from the Castle, some say by means of a rope from a window, and galloped after Orkney to Dunbar. This must have been arranged between them, as he met her a mile from Borthwick.

It is tempting to speculate as to what must have been Mary's appearance on this occasion. One would gladly give one of her official portraits in ruff and diadem, clumped hair and coif, rare as these are, for a sketch of her in this cavalier's dress as, ill, harassed and alarmed, she rode beside her husband through the night from one Castle to another, driven to her last defences.

The Lords, under Mar, Morton, and Hume, had then, with seven or eight hundred horse, taken possession of Edinburgh, the capital making not the least resistance. Upon Du Croc waiting upon them to know their intentions, they justified what might have been called their rebellion on the same three grounds as they had advanced before—"the forcible detention", as they chose to call it, of the Queen by "Bothwell", the safety of the Prince, and revenge for the murder of the King, which crime they considered a disgrace to the whole nation.

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While the Lords were thus justifying themselves to the representative of Charles IX, they learnt that the Duke, with the Queen in his company, had gathered as many men as possible, and marched from Dunbar to Haddington, and from Haddington to Seton. The Lords feared that their daring enemy meant to make an attempt on Edinburgh Castle, and to forestall this, marched on a Sunday morning to meet him on the way.

Du Croc thought of going with them, but gave up this design because he did not wish to appear to support the rebellion. He followed them, however, after three hours, and found them halted on the border of a stream half-a-league from the Queen's army. Du Croc, who seems to have been acting sincerely in the interests of Mary Stewart, then made an effort at patching up a peace between the Queen and her nobility. He begged the Lords in the name of God and that of the King of France

to see if something could not be done to redeem the fortunes of this wretched day.

The Lords (Du Croc does not say who was their spokesman) replied that they only knew of two things to prevent a battle. The first was that the Queen should leave Bothwell immediately, and the second was that Bothwell should decide his guilt or innocence by the old trial of mortal combat. This idea of fighting out the question as to who was guilty of the King's murder by a series of duels, seems to have vexed for weeks the minds of everyone concerned. The Lords told Du Croc on this occasion that twelve men could be found who would willingly in this cause fight twelve of the Queen's side.

But the Frenchman did not think the scheme satisfactory; he asked if they could think of something else. The Lords, however, would not suggest any other expedient; they swore that the truth about the death of the late King must be made known. They seemed to think, in a very ingenuous fashion, that this same truth would come to light as a result of single combats between various champions. At the same time they did not like Du Croc's suggestion that he should go and interview the Queen, at which Du Croc protested strongly, saying that he must remain impartial and not show himself as attached to one side or another.

Lethington (perhaps it was he who all along had been the spokesman) soothed this difficulty over with courteous words and flatteries for the King of France, upon which Du Croc was given fifty horse, passed the brook, and approached the army of the Queen. Presumably he had the French flag or a flag of truce borne before him, for a party of twenty-five or thirty horse set out to meet him and he was soon brought to the presence of Mary, who was then, according to an account written by Drury soon afterwards, attired in a red petticoat with sleeves tied with points, a velvet hat and muffler, a dress which seems to have been the costume of the humblest women of Edinburgh.

In view of the rumours as to the Queen's condition it is noteworthy that she did not, on this occasion as she had on that of other warlike events, appear in any kind of armour but in an easy and womanly attire, though some reports state that her dress (*kilt?*) came only to her knee. She dismounted and sat on a stone during some hours of that tedious day.

Du Croc repeated to Mary the conversation with the Lords of the Council and Mary repeated her old complaint that the

nobility were very evilly disposed towards her, that they had urged her marriage with Bothwell and vindicated him of the deed of which they now accused him. She said that if they would acknowledge their faults she was ready to forgive them.

Bothwell, or rather, the Duke, as Du Croc names him, then rode up with the banner of Royal Scotland, and the Frenchman gives a favourable picture of this much-hated man. In a loud voice and a very bold manner so that his army might hear, the Duke asked Du Croc—"If he was the one wanted?" In the same loud tone the Frenchman replied that the Lords were the humble servants of the Queen, then dropping his voice, added that they were the Duke's mortal enemies.

The Duke, still loudly, and with extreme self-confidence, wanted to know "what harm he had done any?" He said he wished to please everyone and that the Lords were only envious of his greatness, and he added, with an emphasis of his swagger, that fortune was to be won by anyone who chose and there "was not one of them who would not like to be in his place". He then, with what appears chivalry but which may have been opportunism, changed his tone and begged Du Croc, "for the honour of God" to put an end to the trouble in which he saw the Queen whose "suffering was extreme". He reverted to the old theme of single combat and said he was prepared to fight any of the Lords of suitable rank, declaring with the greatest effrontery, "that his cause was so just that he was sure God would be with him".

Mary, however, said she would not allow this and that she espoused her husband's quarrel.

The Duke then, with cool and gay courtesy, remarked that the conversation had ceased and the enemy was already crossing the brook, and making an easy though inaccurate classical allusion (unless the mistake be Du Croc's in the reporting) remarked that Du Croc might imitate the go-between who had tried to bring about peace between the armies of Scipio and Hannibal and who, not able to accomplish this object, had taken up a position where he had watched the battle and found it the greatest sport of his life.

The Frenchman replied, however, that far from finding an amusement in the battle it would cause him the greatest distress.

The old Ambassador, who cannot in the least have been prejudiced in Bothwell's favour, adds: "I am obliged to say that I saw a great leader, speaking with great confidence, and

leading his forces boldly, gaily, and skilfully. I admired him, for he saw that his foes were resolute, he could not be sure of the loyalty of half of his own men, and yet he was quite unmoved."

Here is a glimpse of some of the great masculine charm, courage and skill that fascinated Mary.

Du Croc, seeing he could do no more, left the Queen, who saw him depart with tears in her eyes, and returned to the Lords, who would have no more parleying as, according to Du Croc, both they and Bothwell were eager to have the issue decided by a series of single fights. It is not clear why this procedure was not immediately proceeded with. However, the Lords with morions (helmets) in their hands, begged the French Ambassador to depart, which he did.

Before leaving the field, Du Croc had noticed the two battle flags—Mary's bore the royal lion of Scotland, while the Lords had composed their own standard, which was of ominous design. It represented James as a young child kneeling beside the strangled body of his father, near a tree (because the late King's body was found in a garden near a tree), with a scroll on which was inscribed the words: "Judge and Revenge my cause, O Lord!"

Drury also mentions this banner and says that the Lords thrust it forward so that Mary noticed it, upon which she remarked that she "wished she had never seen Henry Darnley", a statement which, whatever her degree of innocence or guilt, must have been true enough.

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The two armies manoeuvred round each other from eleven in the morning till five in the evening. The horsemen were on foot, for it was the custom of the Scottish cavalry not to mount until the order to attack was given. Drury says that the Queen used "much persuasion and encouragement" to her people to give battle. She failed, however, and towards evening what she and the Duke had always feared, says Du Croc, took place, and the disaffected royal troops made suggestions for a parley.

Upon this taking place it was once more suggested that Bothwell and Tullibardine should fight it out in single combat. Bothwell was willing enough, and the Queen gave way to the suggestion for a duel but refused Tullibardine, demanding someone of higher rank.

Lord Lindsay, the brother-in-law of Moray (one of the murderers of Rizzio), then came forward and was accepted, but by this time both the armies seem to have been out of hand. "They intermingled in great disorder," says Du Croc.

The Queen, then fearing the worst (that is, that all her men would go over to the Lords), sent for Kirkcaldy of Grange, and when he came, asked him "how she could secure the safety of her husband?" According to Nau (her Secretary's and therefore her own account) it was Lethington for whom she asked first, but he would not come under the excuse (and this sounds like Lethington) that "he was not one of the rebels". Atholl sent a similar evasion, and Grange was the third man to whom she appealed for an interview. He told her that he could give no promise for Bothwell's safety, they were determined to take him or die.

Here accounts differ. Either Bothwell overheard what Grange said and taking about twenty-four followers immediately galloped off the field, or Grange took him aside, advised him to depart at once, and assured him that he would not be pursued.

According to this account, which is that of Nau and therefore presumably put down from Mary's own recollections of what took place at Carberry Hill, Bothwell refused to fly, but was at length persuaded by the appeals of the Queen, who entreated him to absent himself for a time until the meeting of Parliament, promising him that if Parliament cleared him she would remain his loyal wife. The Duke thereupon gave her the Bond signed by Morton, Lethington, James Balfour, and others for the King's death, and told her to "take good care of that paper". If this is true it shows that the Duke continually carried on his person the Bond that proved that several of the confederate Lords were as deep as himself in the guilt of the King's murder.

Whatever the details of this dreadful parting it must have been a moment of poignant anguish for Mary who, weary, ill, exhausted, had been waiting on the field all day, surrounded by armed men and in expectation of a battle on which would hang her Crown, her honour, and her life. In parting from her husband she was parting from the only man who was wholeheartedly her champion and whose cause was one with her own. She only surrendered him when she saw the day was lost. She believed that she would, and she probably did, save his life by her suggestion that he should be tacitly allowed to withdraw.

It may be argued that Orkney should not have forsaken her, but that even though his army had abandoned him, he should have remained by her side until forced away. But it is probable that both he and the Queen believed that the Lords would receive her again as their Sovereign, and escort her in honour and state to Edinburgh. This, however, was not the case.

As soon as the Duke and his small following, four Swedes, according to some accounts, probably desperate men who knew their lives were forfeit, had left the field of Carberry Hill, Mary was hurried away like a captive to Edinburgh, both her own army and that of the Lords following her in some sort of confused triumph.

Despite the Lords' fair words and protestations of loyalty and devotion, they treated Mary on this occasion with almost incredible brutality. She was compelled to journey immediately, without the company of friends or woman or servant, and forced to ride from about six o'clock in the evening until one o'clock in the morning, when she was lodged at the Provost's house in Edinburgh, where the ghastly banner with Henry Stewart's murdered body depicted upon it was exhibited before her window.

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This was the nadir of Mary's misfortunes; never again, not even on the last day of her life was she to be so utterly forlorn and miserable. It had been many years since Europe had been shocked by the spectacle of a Queen reduced to such a depth of degradation. It had ceased to be a question of her innocence or guilt; no woman so humiliated could possibly regain Sovereignty.

The humble housewife's dress she wore was torn and dirty, she was given neither rest nor refreshment, nor any manner of service but treated as one beneath consideration, as some miserable criminal awaiting a just doom.

We do not know in what manner of room she was enclosed, but there were armed guards set about it and she was not able to leave it nor had she any privacy. One account says she had been without food or water since the early morning of Carberry Hill.

She was utterly overwhelmed by what she considered her betrayal by the Lords, she had trusted herself to them under the hope, if not under the actual promise, that she would be

treated with respect. She probably feared death, the unspeakably horrible death of an adulteress and murderer; in her disappointment she was reduced almost to a delirium of anguish and her cries and shrieks caused people to gather beneath her window.

Du Croc begged that he might be allowed to see her, but the Lords refused, submitting that as the Queen and Du Croc would speak French they would not be able to set anyone in the room who could understand what passed. They agreed to let him go, however, if they could interview him first, but were distracted from this intention by the riots which broke out in the town.

Mary saw Lethington pass in the crowd beneath her window and shrieked out to him "for the honour of God" to let him speak to her. One account says that he crushed his hat on to his face and hurried on, pretending not to hear, and others that he sent the crowd away and went up to her. It is Nau's version and probably incorrect that Lethington passed by. The Secretary seems at least to have seen the Queen during her miserable captivity, for he gave an account of his interview to Du Croc afterwards, in which he said that Mary had protested against the wrong done her "in separating her from the husband with whom she thought to live and die in the greatest happiness".

Upon which Lethington, with a brutality that seems out of keeping with his nature and certainly in contradiction to the fine manners for which he was famed, replied: "It is a fact that Bothwell, since his marriage with you, has written repeatedly to his first wife and still regards her as his lawful wife, and that Your Majesty is his concubine."

Mary replied that Bothwell's letters would show that this was not true.

We have two accounts of Mary's utter misery and humiliation during this June night.

Du Croc writes: "At one o'clock the next morning Her Majesty appeared at a window, making piteous lamentations and weeping bitterly." And John Beaton writing to his brother, the Archbishop, in Paris, says: "The Queen cried forth to the people that she was held in prison and kept by her own subjects who had betrayed her. She came to the window sundry times in so miserable a state, her hair hanging about her ears and her breast, yea, the most part of her body from the waist up bare

and discovered, no man could look upon her but she moved him to pity and compassion."

After her torture had lasted till nine in the evening the Lords escorted her to Holyrood, two hundred soldiers marching in front of her, carrying the banner representing the murdered King, and a thousand men following. The huge escort and the late hours were not altogether examples of the cruelty of the Lords. Drury says this display of force, this midnight removal was to save her from the fury of the populace, who were filling the air with clamour against the adulteress and murderer and shouting, "Burn her! Burn her! She is not worthy to live! Kill her! Drown her! Burn her! Burn her!" Cries which, no doubt, had penetrated to the Provost's house and induced Mary's frantic hysterics.

Mary, according to tradition, had another protection the use of which shows the sincere wish of the Lords for her safety. The famous "Blue Blanket" was borne before her; this was the banner of the Trade Guilds of Edinburgh, granted to them because of the services of their members in Palestine, and was adorned, by permission of Queen Margaret, with the Scotch thistle. It was regarded as sacred by the people of Edinburgh: its use on this occasion shows that those responsible for Mary's safety regarded her case as desperate.

No sooner had Mary reached Holyrood than she was again removed, to a place where she would be safe from the frenzy of her people and from whence it would be impossible for her to escape.

Melville says the reason of this was the discovery of a letter she had written to Bothwell, confiding it frantically with the promise of a reward—she had nothing on her with which to bribe the guard—if only it might be sent to Dunbar. In this letter she called Bothwell "her dear heart" and declared that she would never forget him nor abandon him during his absence. She said she had sent him away only for his safety, she desired him to be comforted and be on the watch.

The soldier took this letter to the Lords and this is supposed to have decided them to remove Mary from Edinburgh.

It is to be hoped that the story is true, for Mary's fidelity to Bothwell and her thought of him in her bitter extremity would give a gleam of nobility to so much that is merely sordid and horrible. But if there was such a letter it was never produced; it may have been destroyed together with the Bond that Both-

well gave Mary and which would have been taken from her by the Lords whom it incriminated. It is not likely, however, that the discovery of any such letter would cause the removal of Mary from the capital. The Lords must have supposed that she would endeavour to communicate with the man for whom she openly professed an infatuated attachment, and seeing she was so utterly in their power they had no reason to fear her piteous attempts to communicate with her husband. Nor is it much matter of surprise that the letter was not produced afterwards. It did not in any way incriminate Mary, but rather did her credit that she had endeavoured to write to her husband.

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The obvious reason for her removal from Edinburgh seems to be that while she was in the capital she would be the focus of dangerous riots, during which it was quite possible that the mob might storm the palace and put her to a violent death.

The place which was chosen for her captivity was the Castle of Lochleven, which had belonged to the husband of Moray's mother, Lady Douglas, and was then in the possession of his son, Sir William Douglas, who had succeeded his father in 1555. The Castle stood on an island in a lake far out of the reach of the shot of any culver, and in a situation which obviously rendered any attempts at escape or rescue extremely difficult, if not impossible.

The selection of this place for Mary's captivity has been taken as an instance of the spite of Moray, who instructed the Lords as to the disposal of his sister. It certainly seems to have an element of bad taste as the one-time mistress of James V could scarcely have regarded with much affection the offspring of his marriage. At the same time it must be put down to Moray's credit (if he was behind this move, and surely the Lords would not have waited for his instructions) that this was probably the safest place he could find in which to guard his half-sister and protect her from the violence of her infuriated subjects, the insults of the soldiery, and the diatribes of the preachers. Nor, despite the romancers, is there the least evidence that Lady Douglas behaved with spite or petty malice towards her unfortunate captive. It is not even certain that she was living on the island, or merely in residence near. It seems clear that Moray, who had not yet returned to Scotland but with whom the confederate Lords were in close communication, sincerely desired the safety and comfort of his sister, even if he wished

to see her dis-crowned, and that he suggested (if suggest he did) Lochleven as her prison because he thought that both her dignity and her person would be safer there than in any other castle of which he knew.

Moray was in France during these events and the Lords sent to urge his return. He was probably covertly directing affairs the whole time, but he was a man who always liked to have an alibi when anything dubious was being undertaken.

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Mary passed her first days in Lochleven in a state of utter collapse, the natural reaction after the emotions of the last few days and the hysterical attack in the Provost's house. Nau says, though this surely must be an exaggeration, that she remained for "fifteen days or more without eating, drinking, or conversing, so that many thought she would have died". In a fortnight, however, she had not only recovered, was eating and taking exercise, but had contrived to draw under her influence one of her keepers, Lord Ruthven, the son of the assassin of Rizzio. Her charm was indeed her sole possession and her position was desperate. No one could blame her for endeavouring to seduce any man who was likely to be of service to her, though the fact that after her late misfortune she found the spirit to do so, argues a volatile fickle nature.

Ruthven, however, made his devotion too obvious and before Mary had been in Lochleven a month, that is a fortnight after she recovered from her hysterical swoon, he was removed from her prison. Nau says, and we may suppose these statements are authorized by Mary herself, that Ruthven offered the unhappy Queen her liberty if she would become his mistress—a romantic bargain of which the infatuate Lord would never have been able to have fulfilled his part, and which, if true, proves Mary to have been regarded with contempt by her own friends.

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The only Sovereign in Europe who showed any signs of a vigorous championship of Mary was Elizabeth. She was not only compassionate, but she was highly incensed by this outrageous disrespect shown to the sacred person of a princess. As Stravenage forcibly describes her attitude, "she in her mind detesting this barbarous insolence of subjects whom she called oftentimes, traitors, rebels, unthankful and cruel fellows against the princess, her sister and neighbour". Elizabeth sent Sir

Nicholas Throckmorton into Scotland to expostulate with the conspirators for this insolence used against their Queen, and to take some course how to restore her unto her former liberty and to the severe punishment of the murderers of the King.

Throckmorton found "the most part in Scotland incensed against the Queen, who in plain terms denied access unto her both to him and to Villeroy and Crocus, the French Ambassadors. Yet could not the conspirators agree among themselves what to do with her. Lethington and a few others would have her to be restored upon these conditions—that the murderers of the King be punished, the Prince's safety provided for, Bothwell divorced, and religion established. Others would have her to be banished for ever into France or unto England; others were of the opinion that she should be arraigned publicly and then sent unto perpetual imprisonment and her son crowned King. Lastly, others would have her deprived both of her life and kingdom by a public execution, and thus Knox and some ministers of the word thundered out of their pulpits."

Stravenage, the whole object of whose writing seems to be to make out Moray as the prime mover of all these disasters, says that Margaret Douglas, "most malapertly insulted over the calamity of the imprisoned Queen, boasting that she herself was the lawful wife of James V, and that her son, Moray, was his lawful issue". There seems no authority for this.

Another account says that though "the Lady Margaret at first was against the Queen, she afterwards came to favour her".

Margaret Douglas seems to have been a remarkable woman. She had been able to live down the scandal of her connection with James V, by whom she had had three sons and three daughters, and to live respected and admired as the wife of Sir Robert Douglas of Lochleven, to whom she bore two sons and seven daughters.

Mary was fairly well housed under the charge of this lady. Her apartments are supposed to have been those forming the third floor of the second tower of the Castle. They consisted of kitchen, dining-room, sitting-room and bedroom for the Queen's use, with a small oratory in a recess at one of the windows.

She had with her some of her own maids, a cook, and an apothecary, and must have lived with some decency and even

comfort, although her mental sufferings were doubtless nearly insupportable.

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton did not find it easy to obtain an interview with the captive Queen. He bore with him a letter dated from Richmond, written by Cecil and signed by Elizabeth, which was entirely non-committal and only stated that the Queen of England was doing what she could to inquire into Mary's miserable affairs and put them straight. But Sir Nicholas had been instructed to go much further than this. He was to tell Mary that Elizabeth would try to restore her to liberty by persuasion and treaty, or by force, and that she would endeavour to bring to justice the murderers of the late King and would receive under her protection the young Prince.

There was a threatening message to the Lords, whom Elizabeth regarded as bold rebels. Throckmorton was to tell them that Elizabeth neither could nor would endure to have their Sovereign imprisoned or deprived of her estate or put in peril of her person.

The case against Mary can hardly be more clearly put than is done in the first part of these instructions.

Throckmorton is to declare the Queen's grief "at the evil accidents that of late happened from time to time to the Queen of Scots impairing her fame and honour, especially on the death of her husband, horribly murdered so near to her and so few hours after her being with him and nothing done to punish the murderers. Next favouring Bothwell and his associates, men of notorious evil name, whom the world charged with the murder. Thirdly with maintaining him in securing such a strange divorce from his wife, a good lady, as never was heard that a man guilty should for his offences put away his innocent wife and that to be coloured by form of law." Finally to take such a defamed person to her husband which things "almost made Her Majesty think to deal no more with her by way of advice, but look upon her as a person desperate to recover her honour, as other princes, her friends and near kinsmen, also judged".

All this, however, Elizabeth thought, was as nothing compared with the outrage committed on her person "by God's ordinance the prince and Sovereign, by those that are by nature and law subject to her".

This is couched in much the same terms as Thomas Randolph's final summing up of Mary's tragedy in a note he

made about one for whom he had once felt much admiration and grief.

"She governed for four years quietly in Scotland, till a change was made through her disorderly behaviour; first with Chastelard, a scurvy varlet that came with M. D'Amville that was found under her bed; witness Madame Rawley and old Madame Seton. Next with David, who, of a beggarly minstrel sent into Scotland with Moreta, Ambassador of Savoy, was made her chief Secretary, and found at supper in her cabinet in Holyrood, where he received the reward of such a filthy wedlock breaker, with other such filthy behaviour, whereof I am ashamed to speak. Then the murder of Darnley, the marriage with Bothwell, etc. This has driven Mary from the throne, not the intrigues or enmity of Elizabeth."

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Sir Nicholas was not allowed to proceed to Lochleven with his letter and messages. Du Croc had already been refused this privilege and Lethington did not think that this being so, greater consideration could be shown to England.

In the letter in which he sends this news to Elizabeth, Throckmorton states that he has heard "that the Queen is in the Castle of Lochleven, guarded by Lords Lindsay and Lochleven, the owner of the house, and the Lord Ruthven is employed on other commissions because he began to show favour to the Queen and to give her intelligence. She is waited on with five or six ladies, four or five gentlewomen, and two chamberers, whereof one is a Frenchwoman. The Earl of Buchan, the Earl of Moray's brother, has also liberty to come to her at his pleasure." He adds that "the Queen is guarded very straightly because she had refused to lend herself to any plans to seek out the murderers of her husband, or to abandon Bothwell".

She had avowed, Throckmorton had heard, "to live and die with him (Bothwell)", and had said that if the choice were given her between her kingdom and her husband "she would rather live and die with him a simple damsel" and that "she could never consent that he should fare worse or have more harm than she herself".

These sentiments did Mary honour, and went far to redeem her conduct, but the Lords would, of course, find them highly inconvenient.

In the same letter Throckmorton mentions other schemes

for a fourth husband for the Queen—the Earl of Argyll wanted to wed her to his brother, when he had effected the Queen's liberty and Bothwell's destruction.

Sir Nicholas who was, like most of Elizabeth's servants, exceedingly able, intelligent and loyal, found his task difficult and even dangerous. Popular feeling ran so high against the Queen that the Lords dare not show as much leniency as they wished, while "a stranger over busy may soon be made a sacrifice among them", notes the wary Englishman.

An underhand and furtive struggle was taking place between France and England for the custody of the young Prince. Elizabeth was alarmed lest he should fall into the hands of Charles IX, and it was believed in the English Court that Moray, then still in France, was being heavily bribed by the French Government in order to induce him to hand over the young James to their care.

Moray had already received, in common with most of the Scotch Lords, considerable sums from England, and it was now thought wise to offer him yet higher inducements.

At this juncture the Lords sent to this prudent noble desiring his return, and by the end of July he was in London on his way to Scotland. This adroit and vigorous man, of proud blood, of great wealth and influence, who contrived never to make a false step, to be always out of the way when any scandal occurred and yet benefit by it if this was possible, seems to have been regarded by the Governments of Europe as the key to the tangle in Scotland.

The Spanish Ambassador tried to draw from him his mind while he was staying in London. The burning subject of the murder of the King was brought up and Guzman informed Moray of what Mary's confessor had told him—that the Queen had had no knowledge of this crime.

Moray's reply to this is most important. He said that he would tell the Spaniard what he had not told even to Queen Elizabeth, viz., that he knew that Mary had been a party to the murder of her husband, and he declared that this had been proved beyond doubt by a letter, covering three sheets of paper from Mary to Bothwell, which he had heard about from a man who had read it. He gave a rough summary of the contents of the letter, which agrees in some particulars with the notorious Number Two or Glasgow Casket Letter, though

in others it differs, especially on the point of the poisoning of Jane Gordon which Moray told Guzman was referred to in the letter.

This brings us to the famous Casket documents, which the Lords either found, forged, or put together from genuine manuscripts of Mary's almost immediately after her departure to Lochleven.

It was on the twentieth of June, or six days after the Queen surrendered at Carberry Hill, that the celebrated silver casket containing these letters and sonnets was found and brought to Lord Morton. The statement of the Lords was that the Casket was locked, that they broke it open, and that it was formally inspected—"sichted", is the Scotch word used—on the 21st of June in the presence of a number of the Lords, which included not only the confederate Lords who had themselves been implicated in the murder, but such men of comparative respectability and honour as the Earls of Atholl and Mar. Atholl, in particular, was a Roman Catholic and had no reason whatsoever to help blast the reputation of the Queen, whose side he was inclined to favour. If the documents were forged or tampered with he could not have been a party to it; yet he never entered any protest as to their genuineness. If they were forged, then, this must have been before the "sighting" or inspection by the Lords, and whoever could have done this work under pressure in so short a time must have been of diabolical cleverness. No doubt, as Mary afterwards bitterly declared, there were many in Scotland capable of counterfeiting her handwriting, it was an age when every diplomat had in his train experts in forgery and cypher. It would not, however, have been so easy to discover one who could, as it were, get into the mind of Mary and compose letters so apposite to her character and her circumstances.

Taking the letters to be a forgery, the most tempting theory is that Maitland, the clever, inscrutable man who must have known Mary's heart and mind intimately, whose wife was one of the four Maries, a woman who had been the Queen's companion since early childhood, was the forger. He had the opportunity and the wit, he was adroit, unscrupulous, and subtle, and he must have known Mary's love stories in and out.

On the other hand it is quite reasonably believed that he had, since her marriage with Bothwell, been acting in the Queen's best interests and was her sincere, if incensed and

outraged friend. Apart from this, it is held that he can scarcely have been the forger as he did not leave the Queen until the ninth of June—the entire forgery must have been completed by the twentieth of that month—and during that brief period he was regarded by the Lords in general and Morton in particular, with a doubtful eye as the Queen's envoy and possible spy.

It is then a matter of obvious common sense that this man, whose loyalty to the Lords was regarded as so dubious, would not have been entrusted with such a deadly secret as the forging of the documents.¹

Genuine or false, the Lords had in the "casket letters" a mighty weapon against Mary, and one which they were not slow to use; if the letters were genuinely Mary's own production they would be satisfied that they now possessed complete justification in ridding themselves of the rule of a cruel murderer and a heartless wanton. If they forged them they did so with the intention of ridding themselves of Mary as they had ridded themselves of Rizzio, of Darnley, of Bothwell.

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The Earl of Morton's declaration as to the finding of these famous letters, though written a year later for the benefit of Sir William Cecil, may be given place here. He entitled it "The True Declaration and Report of me, James, Earl of Morton, how a certain silver box, overgilt, containing divers missives, writings, sonnets, contracts and obligations for marriage betwixt the Queen, mother of our Sovereign Lord, and James, sometime Earl of Bothwell, was found and used."

This is the gist of the Declaration :

"Upon Tuesday, the nineteenth of June, 1567, I dined in Edinburgh. Lethington was with me.

"A certain man came to me and in a secret manner told me that three servants of the Earl Bothwell, Mr. James Hepburn, Cockburn, brother to Lord Stirling, and George Dalgleish were coming to the town and passed into the Castle.

"Upon this I sent my cousin, Mr. Andrew Douglas, and Robert Douglas' brother and James Johnston of Westerall with others of my servants to the numbers of sixteen towards the Castle to make search for the said persons, and if possible to apprehend them. According to these directions they went. At first they could not find them

¹ As stated before, a possibility is that the hostility of the Lords was feigned and Lethington their secret instrument.

for they had passed out of the Castle. Mr. Andrew Douglas found, however, Mr. James Hepburn's horse. James Johnston apprehended John Cockburn, while Robert Douglas continued searching for George Dalgleish. A good fellow came to him and offered for a mean piece of money to reveal where George Dalgleish was. Upon being fee'd he gave this intelligence and George Dalgleish was arrested with several papers upon him, being the Earl Bothwell's titles to Liddesdale and the Lordships of Dunbar and Orkney.

"Dalgleish said that he had only come to fetch some of his master's clothing and that he had not any letters or important papers upon him, but his gesture and behaviour being found suspicious he was sent to the Tolbooth and there to be tortured. Before he had received any vigorous punishment, however, he called for my cousin, Mr. Andrew Douglas and told him he would reveal the truth, and he was then brought to the Castle, where, from under the bed, he fetched out a silver box and the same was brought to me at eight o'clock at night.

"Because it was late I kept it all that night and in the morning, the twenty-first of June, in the presence of the Earls of Atholl, Mar, Glencairn, myself, the Lords Hume, Sempill, Sanquhar, the Marquess of Graham, the Secretary Lethington, and the Lord of Tullibardine and the said Mr. Andrew Douglas, the said box was stricken up because we lacked the keys, and the letters it contained inspected, and immediately afterwards delivered again into my hands and custody."

Besides the eight letters and the sonnets which are of no literary and of little personal value, the casket contained two marriage contracts between Mary and Bothwell written in French and signed by the Queen and the Earl.

An extremely beautiful casket now in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton is reasonably supposed to be that which was "stricken up": it has a broken lock.

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While the Lords were thus secretly handling this deadly weapon against Mary, the Queen herself was recovering some of her spirits. It was even reported that she was playing at cards and dancing and singing in her island prison. This would hardly have been heartfelt gaiety, but either a mask for her misery or the wild outburst of hysteria. In any case, she had so far recovered her balance as to take interest in worldly affairs again, and she who had shrieked in abandoned terror at the window of the Provost's House in Edinburgh, disarrayed in her torn citizen's gown, with bare breast and tattered hair, now

wrote to Sir Robert Melville, her former Lord Chamberlain, begging him to send her certain articles of attire. She remembered the garments she required, which were, she said, in the keeping of Servais de Condé, the Keeper of her Wardrobe at Holyrood.

Captive she might be and her fortunes at the depths, but she had not lost her interest in earthly splendour, and in the list of her requirements there is no hint that she was wearing mourning, nor had humbled herself with plain raiment. Mary's desires were for "half an ell of crimson satin and half an ell of blue satin. Twine silk, sewing gold and sewing silver", this probably for a piece of embroidery to beguile her leisure. She also wished for three dresses, doublet and skirts, white satin, crimson, black satin, also a loose gown of taffetas and the clothes she had bade Lady Lethington send her. She was surprised that the clothes for her maids had not arrived for she says, with pardonable exaggeration, "they are naked". She wanted shoes, cambric, and linen cloth, two pairs of sheets and two ounces of black sewing silk. She wished for a dozen of raising needles and moulds to be sent; she wanted bed coverings and she remembered some conserves which were in the keeping of her Master of the Wardrobe, dried damask plums and pears. Melville was not to fail to send her all that he had of these.

What desperate loneliness, what cruel apprehension did she hope to beguile with nibbling sweetmeats?

There is no good evidence that she endeavoured to send a letter to Bothwell, the man for whose sake she would have gone "to the world's end in a white petticoat", nor that he endeavoured to communicate with her, though it is possible that a mutual attempt was made. We have no evidence that he cared for her in the least. He had cast his hazard and lost it; it was likely enough he forgot the Queen of Scots now she was ruined and had no more to give him nor any man, and thought only of preserving his own life and perhaps adventuring again in some other land. He was still under thirty, and his enterprise and audacious courage were without limits.

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A few days after the inspection of the "casket letters," on June 26th, a Proclamation was issued by the Lords offering a reward of a thousand crowns for the apprehension of the Queen's husband. He had fled from Dunbar to the Border; there was

news of him here and there, galloping about endeavouring to collect a force. He had been heard of with the Earl of Huntly at Strathbogie, but Throckmorton had gleaned, among other wild rumours, that the Gordon had turned on the man to whom he had sacrificed his sister and had even made an attempt on his life, but that Bothwell, hearing of this in time, had escaped into the Orkneys.

In the name of the imprisoned Queen a summons was issued charging him and his accomplices to appear to answer to the Law by August 22nd, otherwise he should be "put to the horn".

Throckmorton was still refused permission to visit the Queen and had to feed Cecil and Elizabeth with scraps of gossip. One story went that Mary had found a boat near the Castle and had endeavoured to escape, but had been apprehended in time and afterwards kept more straightly, at which she complained bitterly of her hard treatment, and had been heard to say to some of the Lords about her that she would rather live in a close nunnery in France or with the old Dowager of Guise, her grandmother.

On July 18th Throckmorton was able to write to his mistress more precise news of Mary, for he had just interviewed Sir Robert Melville, who had been allowed to see the Queen at Lochleven and to bring from her a letter to the Lords; perhaps Melville had taken the clothes, sewing silks and plums to the weary captive.

Mary put forward a few modest personal requests—that if she must be imprisoned might she not be placed in the Castle of Stirling with her son, could she not have some more gentlewomen, some modest minister (priest, presumably is meant), and an embroiderer to help her with her work? As to the Government, she offered to give it over to the Earl of Moray, or to a committee of Lords which included the Duke of Châtelherault, the head of the Hamiltons, the Earls Huntly, Argyll, Atholl, and Lennox.

After this abandonment of her worldly fortunes into the hands of her enemies she made complaints about her treatment, saying, with a touching dignity, that "if they would not regard her as their Queen they might use her as their Sovereign's daughter whom many of them knew, and as their Prince's mother".

According to Melville she still refused to abandon her third

husband, although she was willing that the murderers of her second husband might be pursued.

Throckmorton had found means to smuggle a letter in to her in which he let her know that Elizabeth was her friend, and advised her to divorce herself from Bothwell.

Mary's reply was that she could not consent to this but would rather die, because she should in time have a child by Bothwell and by denouncing him she would disgrace both herself and her offspring. Throckmorton, however, considered the case too desperate for such considerations to have any weight. "I have persuaded her to save her own life and her child's, to choose the least hard conditions."

This child seems, indeed, the crux and climax of the whole tragedy. The various stories of her having a child or children, for Nau says twins, while she was at Lochleven, are too vague to be worth examining in detail, yet do point to the one conclusion put so roundly in Elizabeth's letter, in which the Queen of England says that "she looks upon Mary as a person desperate to recover her honour, as other princes, her friends and near kinsfolk also judge".

It would have been quite possible for Mary, surrounded by her own women, her apothecary, and servants, to have been delivered of a child at Lochleven, without her guards knowing positively of the fact. This might have been, most reasonably considering her circumstances, a miscarriage, in which case the dead infant could easily have been disposed of, or it might conceivably have been a living child who was, as romantic anecdotes state, smuggled out of the Castle and brought up in France.

When Mary made this statement to Throckmorton it was the middle of July, exactly two months since her marriage to Bothwell, and if they had not been lovers before that date all talk of a living child or of a serious miscarriage is of course ridiculous. Bedford had written to Leicester, June 15th, a month after her marriage, "the Queen is with child".

Seven weeks gone with child, she said herself. Yet Nau, writing under Mary's inspiration, declares plainly that the Queen was in a state of collapse following the birth of twins.

Those champions of the Queen who declare that Mary had no child at Lochleven, that she never said that she was going to have one, and that she was in the whole matter most vilely traduced and slandered by the Lords and Elizabeth's agents, can

only support their case by maintaining a whole campaign of lies on the part of everyone who wrote of the affair.

What possible reason, for instance, could Throckmorton have for sending such information to Elizabeth if it were not true? If Mary did not make this excuse for remaining faithful to Bothwell why should Throckmorton have invented it? And why did she allow Nau to put it in his "history"?

If the conclusions of the gossips of Europe and the opinion of Mary's kin and fellow princes in supposing the whole tragedy had revolved round her desperate desire to save her honour was correct, it becomes almost inevitable to believe that the child was of seven months, not seven weeks, date, and that it was disposed of secretly. Seven months takes us back to the time that Mary was mooted a divorce from Henry Stewart and spoken of as Bothwell's mistress by Lennox and Buchanan.

Among the people of Scotland there seems not to have been a shred of doubt as to Mary's guilt. Throckmorton says that while the Lords and Councillors were minded to protect Mary and had no intention of cruelty or violence, yet she was in very great peril of her life by reason of the people, among whom it was public speech that their Queen had no more liberty nor privilege to commit murder nor adultery than any other private person, neither by God's law, nor by the laws of the realm.

Throckmorton found the most reasonable and wisest man to be Lethington, but even with him he could do nothing, though the Secretary thought "that ten or twelve thousand crowns of English money" might be well employed in securing Elizabeth's influence in Scotland.

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By July 22nd the confederate Lords had made an official reply to Elizabeth's demands for the better treatment of Mary. In this they make no mention of the Casket Letters and indeed, gloss over Mary's guilt, putting it all on to Bothwell, as "the murderer of the King and the ravisher of the Queen".

In Stravenage's account of this long document he writes: "The Lords protested that they shut up the Queen into that solitary place with no other intention than they might keep her asunder from Bothwell, whom she loved immeasurably, until that wilful love towards him and her womanly rage towards them was assuaged." A neat summary.

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This was an hour of triumph for John Knox, who returned

to Edinburgh to denounce the Queen with all the force of his fanatical frenzy, lashing the rage of the people to dangerous heights against the unhappy captive of Lochleven.

The black Puritan now felt justified in his former suspicions of the elegant gentlewoman from France. He could point with grim satisfaction "to what bloody end the stinking pride of woman had come". Without restraint or decency the Queen was blackguarded from every pulpit in Edinburgh; caricatures, pamphlets and ballads were composed to her scorn and abuse. She was "Jezebel", she was "Delilah", she was "Clytemnestra", she was "the Scarlet Woman" in person. Knox appealed to superstitious terror when he warned Scotland that a great plague would fall from Heaven on the whole country if Mary and Bothwell were spared from their proper punishment. This proper punishment, as Mary knew only too bitterly well, was the stake.

John Knox had been the witness of many horrible deeds in his time, the contemporary of many ghastly crimes—an aged Cardinal stabbed to death at the door of his bedchamber, an unarmed servant gashed to pieces by the daggers of armoured nobles, a young King dragged from his bed in his nightgown and strangled, a graceful young courtier hurried to the block for an indiscretion. There is no doubt that Knox was quite willing and that he had Scotland behind him in his readiness to add to this series of grim spectacles that of a Queen of Scotland dragged to the stake and burnt alive as an adulteress and murderer.

During this hot and unrestrained state of national feeling, Lord Lindsay, Moray's brother-in-law, went to Lochleven and wrested from Mary her signature to the Act of Abdication, by which she resigned for ever the throne of Scotland which she had occupied since she was a few days old, and handed on this doubtful honour to her infant son. The means by which he obtained this concession from Mary are not known.

It is impossible now to ascertain exactly what lies behind the formal words of the document by which Mary is made to declare that "worn out by long, irksome and tedious travail, so vexed and worried that body, spirit and senses were altogether unable longer to endure it", the Queen renounced the office and Government "in favour of our most dear son". By a second document she gave the Government to Moray till James should be seventeen years old.

Until Moray's return and in case of his refusal to accept the office of Regent, a group of Lords was named as governors of the realm, the Head of the Hamiltons, Châtelheiault, Lennox, Argyll, Atholl, Morton, Glencairn, and Mar. It is supposed that, if the Casket Letters were genuine, Lindsay took these to Lochleven and showed them to the Queen, obtaining her signature by this means. Surely, even if the letters had been forgeries, the sight of them would have alarmed Mary into doing whatever was asked of her rather than permit their publication. She must have known, if she possessed anything of the piercing understanding with which she is credited, the state of the feeling in the country and that any tale against her would be believed. She must have heard echoing in her ears the cries of the Edinburgh populace as they surged round the Provost's House with cries of "Burn! Burn! Kill! Kill!"

Stravenage says that she was "terrified with death" to force her to sign. Throckmorton had heard that the Lords, in case of the Queen's refusal, had minded "to proceed with violence and force as well as for the Coronation of the Prince as for the overthrow of the Queen". He adds that there were three charges in preparation against Mary—"Tyranny, for breach and violation of their laws and decrees of the realm; Adultery, as well with the Earl Bothwell as with others, having, as they say, sufficient proof against her for the crimes; thirdly, they mean to charge her with the murder of her husband, whereof they say they have as apparent proof against her as may be, as well of her own testimony of her own handwriting which they have recovered and also by sufficient witnesses."

The testimony of her own handwriting refers, probably, to the Casket Letters. But who can the "sufficient witnesses" be?

Nau's account of the ugly scene of the Abdication (which must have been passed, if not inspired by Mary), shows the wretched woman ill in bed from a miscarriage or abortion, the dismal end of that child of Bothwell which had been the cause of all the misery, while Lindsay and Ruthven, who appears to have recovered from his brief infatuation and was now ranged on the side of her enemies, together with two notaries and Robert Melville, compelled her to sign the documents. Nau adds the rather wild tale that if she had not signed she would have been taken from Lochleven and thrown into the lake as she was crossing it, or else "conveyed to some island in the middle of the sea, there to be kept unknown from the whole world in close

custody for the remainder of her life". Surely more practical means of forcing the Queen's hand could have been found than such a crazy threat as this.

Nau says, however, that the Queen refused to sign the papers, Lindsay told her to rise from bed and that he would carry her to a place where he would give a good account of her to the Lords of the country, and finally said brutally that if she did not sign she would compel them to cut her throat, however unwilling they might be. At this the Queen signed, declaring, however, that she had only done so under menace and that she would respect the Decds only so long as she remained in captivity.

This is scarcely likely to be true; Mary, surely, would not be likely to have said anything so foolish, whatever her mental reservations may have been as she appended her signature to the Act of Abdication, as warning the Lords that when she escaped she would not respect this signature—by doing this she was condemning herself to captivity for life.

However Lord Lindsay obtained this signature Mary was threatened, overawed, and had little intention of abiding by the Act of Abdication if she could regain her liberty.

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Sir Nicholas Throckmorton had definitely failed in his embassy; he had not saved the Queen of Scots, he had not made peace between her and the confederate Lords. He was afraid of Elizabeth's rage and wrote a long, detailed letter excusing himself and giving what account he could of the tumultuous happenings in Scotland. The Englishman thought it might be possible to get hold of that spark of wildfire, the cause of all the trouble, "the Duke" or Earl of Bothwell, who was then in the Castle of Spynie with various people, among whom was Cecil's spy, Christopher Rokesby, who had offered to betray him into Elizabeth's hands.

Throckmorton did not think this device very practicable, the Earl being accompanied by "twelve or fourteen desperate persons who were principal doers at the murder of the late King". Another objection, though not so cogent a one, was that Elizabeth's "princely nature and godly mind would not consent to any murder". However, Throckmorton thought that if the said Earl could be executed by justice or the world rid of him by God's hand "for the inconvenience he has brought the Queen your cousin", it would surely be a very fortunate

event. All this guarded language seems to mean that if Throckmorton could get Bothwell privately disposed of, the deed would surely be very acceptable to Elizabeth and to a number of other people.

The same letter says that Jane Gordon was not with her husband (as Throckmorton named Bothwell), and that the young Prince, then thirteen months old, had been crowned in "the great Church of Stirling by the Bishop of Orkney (to make amends for performing Bothwell's marriage ceremony) the Laird of Dun, and the Superintendent of Lothian. Mr. Knox preached, and there was great rejoicing". A thousand bonfires blazed in Edinburgh, the Castle shot off twenty pieces of artillery, "the people made great joy, dancing, and acclamations".

Amidst all these festivities, Throckmorton was himself in a difficult position. The Sovereign to whom he had been accredited was deposed, and he did not know if he was allowed by Elizabeth to acknowledge James as King of Scotland. Nor was it easy for him to leave Edinburgh: "I am in a town guaided by men of war which do visit all men that do enter and issue. I have no horses but must depend upon the Lords' order for the furthering of me and my train. I cannot depart but at their pleasure, and when I am forth of Edinburgh I cannot safely return to Berwick without they give me conduct, especially in this broken world."

The English Ambassador had, however, accomplished something by his abortive journey to Scotland. According to his own account in a letter to Leicester, and this is confirmed by Robert Melville, he had "in that broken world", saved the life of the unhappy prisoner of Lochleven: "Though I could neither obtain access to this Queen nor procure her liberty with restitution to her estate, yet I have at this time preserved her, but for what continuance I am uncertain."

Robert Melville wrote to Elizabeth to the same effect: "To be plain with Your Majesty, the greater number was so bent in rigour against my mistress that extremity had been used if Your Highness' Ambassador had not been present, who did utter both his wisdom and affection to Her Majesty that he only did put aside the present inconvenience and did so procure the matter and both life and honour have been preserved."

So did Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, with great address and courage, cheat the good people of Edinburgh and that valiant Protestant John Knox, of a gratifying spectacle to conclude their

gaieties—the trial and execution of the mother of the infant King, at whose coronation they were all rejoicing.

The Englishman did not himself quite understand the deep root of the rage against Mary, who seemed at this time to have not one friend to speak for her : “ whether it were from fear, fury or zeal, I know not ”, he wrote, but it was obvious that, either out of dread of Mary’s future vengeance if she ever came to power again, or because they believed Scotland could never be quiet while she lived, or because the people were clamouring for her blood, the Lords hesitated as to whether or no Mary was to be deprived of “ life and honour ”; meaning that there would have been a public “ trial ” of the Queen as adulteress and murderer, in which she would have had no chance whatsoever.

Allowing what we will for puritanical bigotry, popular ignorance, the arts of those implicated in the murder of the King directed towards shifting the blame on to Mary, and any lies, intrigues or double dealings that may have confused the issue, it is impossible to believe that an innocent, persecuted woman, who had always acted from pure, noble motives, could have fallen so low. The instinct of the people, even in these brutal times, was revolted at what they thought the base crimes of this delicate, brilliant creature, twice a Queen, of whom they had been so briefly proud. “ Lilies that fester smell worse than weeds ” runs the tag, and it was the sweet graciousness, the seductive charm of Mary, her youth and elegance that made what Randolph terms her “ filthy behaviour ” so hideous to Scotland.

This contrast between her fair exterior, her pleasant ways, and the sordid horrors of lust, blood and treachery in which she was so hopelessly involved gave her, to the common mind, a supernatural wickedness, the evil of a witch, an enchantress from Hell, an angel of the Devil. There had been thick rumours of spells, potions, of ghosts, visions, and all the devilment of magic. Earl Bothwell, to whom every vice and crime had been imputed, was believed to be a wizard—did not the Book command “ Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live ”? Since the famous Bull of Innocent VIII in 1484 hundreds of witches, male and female, whose records were clean compared to those of the Queen and Earl Bothwell, had perished at the stake in Scotland.

If Nau’s account may be believed, and Mary herself allowed it to stand, the stern Lindsay and the young Ruthven, who seems to have soon recovered from his tenderness towards the

Queen, must have been aware from what weakness Mary was suffering as they bent over her bed demanding her signature to the Act of Abdication—"A flux from miscarriage of twins, her issue by Bothwell", writes Nau plainly.

This tale would spread all over Scotland and confirm all the sinister rumours that had tarnished the Queen. Who would believe that here was not, at last, the shameful cause revealed of the husband's murder, the hasty divorce, the hasty marriage? Mary had asked for her apothecary to be sent to Lochleven; gossip of the ugliest would be rife: "The women," says Throckmorton, "were more violent than the men, and yet they were 'mad enough'."

It is not likely that Mary, however skilful a use she had made of her "vertugardine" or "garde infant" could have silenced all rumours and tittle-tattle, and this was a woman's business and one likely to inflame feminine opinion fiercely against the wretched Queen. A French satirist, D'Aubigné, wrote, not so long after this, of the "Amours de nos sales princesses" who became the mistresses of their servants and whose illicit issue was "tuez par le apotiquaires". This kind of scorn was felt for Mary Stewart when her own half-estranged friends, Maitland, Tullibardine and Atholl advised her by Robert Melville to sign anything to save her life. And it is difficult to believe that all this bitter contempt and fury was directed against one wholly innocent.

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The defiance of the Lords considerably angered Elizabeth and decided her to espouse even more warmly Mary's cause.

"As she (Elizabeth) is a princess," wrote the Queen to Throckmorton, "if they continue to keep her (Mary) in prison or touch her life in person she (Elizabeth) will not fail to revenge it to the uttermost on such as shall be in any wise guilty."

At the end of July, Moray, on his way to Scotland, had an interview with Elizabeth at Windsor in which the affairs of Mary were discussed. As usual Moray's expressed sentiments were of irreproachable morality; he grieved for the Queen's position, "not only was she his sister, but he was much beholden to her", but he also grieved for the King's murder and the Bothwell business. He feared that the troubles in Scotland would be difficult to amend, but he was returning to see what might be done. He thought it would be impossible to liberate

the Queen by force and he agreed with Guzman de Silva, who reports this interview, that "if Bothwell were where the Queen is it would be easy to settle this". Once Bothwell were killed, added Moray smoothly, Mary would be free of him and they would be safe from the dishonour and shame of seeing their Queen married to a man who had another wife living.

It is impossible to judge from these suavely expressed opinions, conventionally just and reasonable, if Moray really was the loyal patriot warmly desirous of saving his sister from herself, or an astute and unprincipled intriguer who had engineered the whole revolution himself, a plotter working skilfully from a distance and underhand, moving in close alliance with Maitland of Lethington, who certainly was, as regards his loyalty to Mary, considerably mistrusted by many of his contemporaries.

The Bishop of Mondovi describes Maitland at this date as a man believed to be "so astute and unprincipled that in all the late treason he had thought to have thrown the stone without seeming to move his hand".

Elizabeth had been so wrought up by the Scotch affairs that she lost her temper with Cecil, whom she suspected of being, as indeed he was, lukewarm in the cause of the Queen of Scots, and of favouring the Lords. Popular opinion in England was against Mary. The Secretary wrote to Throckmorton that "the Queen sent for me hastily and entered into a great offensive speech that nothing was suggested of for her to do to revenge the Queen of Scots imprisoned and to deliver her".

In the middle of this violent scene when the Secretary was answering as "warily as he could" came a letter ("truly with a good opportunity" remarks Cecil gratefully) from Throckmorton, in which he stated that it was not a question of saving the Queen of Scots and restoring her to her throne, but of preserving her life.

This gave even Elizabeth pause. It was true enough. Not only had Mary to dread the rising fury of the populace inflamed by the bold invective of Knox and his fellow preachers, but even such Roman Catholic Lords who had hitherto more or less warmly been the Queen's supporters, had begun to come round to the winning party and to agree to her destruction. Even the Hamiltons who, in their hatred of their rivals, the Lennox faction, had hitherto been on Mary's side, now believed her cause lost and were ready to abandon her. With unblushing

cowardice and treachery they wished to secure themselves in this disloyalty by the death of the Queen, for they feared that if they forsook her and she afterwards regained her liberty, it might be the worse for them.

Throckmorton was scandalized at such shameless double-dealing. "I could not think, I said, that noblemen could have such double faces and such traitorous minds." He appealed, however, not to their honour or their conscience, but to their self-interest when he said that the Queen would be more useful to them alive than dead. With Bothwell slain or divorced she might marry one of the Hamiltons or a brother of the Earl of Argyll.

Tullibardine, the man who had been first Bothwell's friend and afterwards his vigorous enemy, saw, however "not so good an outgate by any of these devices" as by the Queen's death. "The Lords love not the Queen and they know she has no great fancy to any of them. By this much they fear her the more because she is young and may have many children, which is a thing they would be rid of."

Throckmorton exhausted himself talking the Lords round, in dissuading them from the death of Mary. "I used the best persuasions I could and at good length, some of the Law of God, some of the Law of man, some for the honour of their country and each for that of himself and his friends."

Lethington afterwards came to see Throckmorton and confirmed what Tullibardine had said, that the Archbishop of St. Andrews (he who was suspected of having a hand in Darnley's murder), had advised that the best thing would be to take away the Queen's life, upon which all the nobles of the country would be able to come together without fear of the future. Politically, of course, the advice was good; Mary could never be anything but a source of trouble.

At this sinister conjuncture of Mary's affairs, Moray arrived in Edinburgh and firmly took the lead of all the treacherous, discontented, entangled factions. This strong, prudent man, who represented to the popular mind law, order, and stability, as well as the triumph of the Reformed Religion, was received with great joy by all people in Edinburgh, and four days after his entry into the capital, went to see his imprisoned sister at Lochleven. With him was the Earl of Atholl, as honourable and moderate a man as was then to be found in Scotland,

together with that James Douglas, the Earl of Morton, of whom nothing good has ever been said.

We have Throckmorton's account of this interview, how obtained he does not say. According to him the Queen received her brother with "great passion and weeping" and brought him apart from the other two and talked to him aside for two hours before supper-time. This conversation "was nothing pleasant to the Queen" for Moray was evasive and would not discover his intentions. A meal relieved the strain of the tedious verbal fencing, which was taken up again and continued to "one of the clock after midnight".

Moray then showed his hand and admonished the Queen in the tone of a religious adviser, coldly rebuking her for all "her misgovernments and disorders".

Mary turned these masculine attacks by feminine defences; her behaviour was such as would have been that of any woman in her place. She wept bitterly, "sometimes she acknowledged her faults, some things she did confess, some things she did excuse, some things she did extenuate".

Moray, however, was not softened by these tears and this feeble submission, this half-confession. He left her "in hope of nothing but of God's mercy".

But by the morning, however, he had a little relented. He declared that he "would assure her of her life and, as much as lay in him, the preservation of her honour. As for her liberty, it lay not in his power, neither was it good for her to seek it nor presently to have it for many respects."

Mary appeared perfectly satisfied with these concessions. She embraced her brother, kissed him, and begged him not to refuse the Regency.

If this be a correct report of her behaviour, it shows that she had been tormented by the fear of a violent and shameful death and was so relieved at her brother's promise of protection that she cared for nothing else.

She then pressed on Moray all her jewels, which were of great value, and her other goods, bidding him to keep them for her son. Moray, who appears to have behaved throughout with cold and impressive dignity, then commanded Lindsay, Ruthven and Lochleven to treat the Queen "with gentleness, liberty, and with all good uses" and took leave of her. She wept again, embraced him very lovingly, kissed him, and sent by him her blessing unto the prince her son.

It is significant that there is not a word of Bothwell in this account. Moray does not mention the Earl's crime, nor does the Queen protest her love for her husband. Perhaps some such matter passed in secret talks between them which have not been reported. Mary had, indeed, spoken the last of Bothwell; of her love and her devotion and her desire to share his fortunes we hear no more. If she ever uttered any such sentiments they have not been reported. Perhaps her passion was spent, perhaps it had been killed by fear, exhausted by illness, effaced by the birth of his dead child, which relieved her of the horror of public disgrace.

In any case, this love story was over, as it had begun, in blood and violence and great unhappiness.

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Throckmorton says that Moray waited on him to give an account of this interview with his sister and here Bothwell is mentioned. Moray declared that one of the causes of the Queen's trouble which he had put before her was "your own persisting in this inordinate affection with the Earl of Bothwell", and he told her that for the future she must show a better conversation, a more modest behaviour and "an apparent show that you do abhor the murder of your husband and do mislike your former life with Bothwell". But the Queen's reply is not given.

Moray told Throckmorton that he had never seen the Queen in better health nor better spirits, a statement that it seems impossible to believe, unless Mary was hysterical, or quite heartless.

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The confederate Lords showed considerable resentment at Elizabeth's interference in Scottish affairs. "The sharp, round threats" which Throckmorton had been ordered to deliver in her name were answered with a stern defiance: "If you will burn our borders, we will do the like to yours, and whensoever you invade us we are sure France will aid us, for their deeds stand fast and they are bound by their deed to defend us.

"Many things have been done, much time spent, and strange language used, charging another prince's subjects to set the Queen at liberty, but nothing had been done by Her Majesty (Elizabeth), either for the apprehension of Bothwell and the murderers for the safeguard of the King or for the safety of

these Lords. Will the Queen your mistress arm two or three ships to apprehend Bothwell, pay a thousand soldiers for a time to reduce all the forts of this realm to the King's obedience?"

Thus boldly defied, the enraged Elizabeth recalled the patient Throckmorton. To show that no personal ill-will was intended the English Ambassador was presented by the Lords with a present of gilt plate, worth, Throckmorton thought, two hundred marks, which, however, he refused "as it came from the King whom I took to be Prince and not from the Queen. Lethington accompanied me to my lodging, persisting I should change my mind, but I would not yield and took leave."

He heard some more news of Bothwell before his return to England. The Queen's husband had used the sea as his uttermost refuge, and in the company of pirates from all countries was cruising about the Orkneys where he held the Dukedom few allowed him. Kirkcaldy of Grange, breathing fury and vengeance, had been sent to pursue him: "By encounter with him, either by sea or land, he shall either carry me with him, or else I shall bring him dead or quick to Edinburgh." This seems to contradict the story that Kirkcaldy allowed Bothwell to escape at Carberry Hill.

At one time it seemed as if Bothwell were to be captured among the wild islands of the North, but Kirkcaldy's ship grounded on a rock and while he was saving his men and his guns Bothwell made off. He was pursued for sixty miles, but disappeared towards the Norwegian coast.

Earl Bothwell's game was now up, he was utterly ruined. As he had not answered the summons to appear before the Parliament he had been declared a traitor and "put to the horn" and all his goods and estates forfeited. There had been bloody brawls at Spynie Castle, where Huntly had tried to betray Bothwell, and the latter was reported to have slain a son of his kinsman, the Bishop of Murray.

We do not know if any news of the disappearance of her husband from Scotland reached Mary in Lochleven, nor even if she inquired after him, nor if she railed bitterly against the Fate which separated them, and declared again, as she had declared only a few months previously "that she would follow him to the ends of the earth in a white petticoat; that she did not desire that his fate should be in any way worse than hers".

By the autumn accounts show Mary as once more gay and high-spirited, making friends with her warders, with good

health of person, "as lusty and as merrily disposed as at any time since her arrival in this realm" as Moray wrote to Bedford. "She waxes fat", wrote Drury, "and, instead of choler, makes show of mirth." This, of course, on hearsay, as Drury never was at Lochleven.

The fresh outbreak of the Wars of Religion in France put out of the question any possible help for Mary from that quarter, though there was some formal discussion between Catherine and Elizabeth on the subject. Elizabeth could do no more on the Queen of Scots' behalf, and Moray thought he had done enough in saving her life, giving her good advice, and seeing that she was decently cared for; he made "fair weather" with her, perhaps with an eye to the future.

With Bothwell out of the way, as good as dead, the Queen safely a prisoner, the young King crowned, and the prudent Moray Regent, it seemed that Scotland might become as tranquil a country as any then in Europe.

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Mary, however, was not prepared to remain quiescent at Lochleven. With the recovery of her health and spirits she began to have hopes for the future and since neither Pope, Kings nor nobles could do anything in her behalf, she looked round to see what she might contrive of the material at her command.

George Douglas (not to be confused with the murderer of that name), a youth of eighteen, son of the Lady Margaret Douglas and half-brother of the Regent and brother of the Lord of Lochleven, was fired by the charms and the sorrows of the captive Queen into a romantic devotion for her service. Nor was his compassion and his admiration unrewarded. According to the gossip whose findings Drury reports in one of his letters to Cecil, written at the end of October: "a suspicion of the over-great familiarity between the Queen here and Mr. Douglas and half-brother of the Regent and brother of the Lord more and worse spoken of than I may write". So far did the scandal go that it was asserted that Mary had had a child by George Douglas during her captivity in his mother's castle.

The tale is unconfirmed and one is at liberty to believe that this was a mere platonic romance, but that Mary could, even in the hope of securing her liberty, have encouraged, however slightly, any lover, indulged in any coquetry, laughter, gaiety, or dancing so soon after the events of that summer, shows an incorrigible lightness on her behalf.

So too does the talk of a fourth marriage for her, current by the end of that winter. The Earl or Argyll's brother was again put forward as a pretender to the hand of the captive Queen. Another who was suggested was the young Lord Methven "a gentleman of twenty-one years of age, being a Stewart". These schemes, Drury says, "breed great comfort to Her Grace".

According to the same authority, Mary had asked her brother that she might be allowed to marry George Douglas and Moray had replied that "he was overmean a marriage for Her Grace". George Douglas had then been removed from Lochleven because of the kindness between him and the Queen, but lingered on the shores of the lake and found means to communicate with the captive. The story went that at this time she had endeavoured to escape from the Castle, disguised as a laundress, but that in holding up her muffler to her face when in the boat, the fairness of her hands had discovered her ruse and she had been brought back. Mary was supposed to have been bringing Margaret Douglas round to her side by tempting her ambition and possibly her affection by the suggestion of a marriage with George Douglas, but surely no woman would have wished her son, and he a boy, to be the fourth husband of Mary Stewart.

Drury reported that Douglas had secret access to the Castle and that the affection was great between him and the Queen, and that "her liberty, by favour, force or stealth, is shortly looked for".

Nau's history, which we may consider Mary's own account of this curious affair, makes out Douglas' affection to be purely romantic, chivalrous, and platonic. He makes no mention of any of these possible fourth husbands; if Mary made any such suggestions they were probably insincere.

It is supposed that by the means of this romantic youth Mary was able to send two letters to Catherine de' Medici appealing for help, which were written in the early part of 1568. They are both written in an exaggerated strain of self-justification and complaint. There is no reason to suppose that Mary was being as barbarously treated as these lamentations would give one to understand. In her first letter she bewails: "The miseries I endure are more than I once believed it was in the power of human sufferance to sustain and live", and mentions "her dreadful calamity". And in the second she speaks of the barbarity of her cruel jailers, and in one that she wrote at this time to the faithful and loyal Archbishop of Glasgow, sent by

the hand of the equally trustworthy John Beaton, the Archbishop's brother, she wrote that "I have neither paper nor time to write more, unless to entreat the King, the Queen and my uncles to burn my letters, for, should it be known that I have written, it may cost a great many lives, put my own in peril, and cause me to be still more strictly guarded".

Both the letters to Catherine de' Medici show Mary's wild trust in France and her wilder delusion as to the feeling in Scotland—"if you do not take me by force, I shall never go from hence, of that I am sure, but if you will please to send troops, all the Scots will revolt against Moray and Morton, if they have but the means of gathering themselves together".

While Mary was thus frantically beating against the bars the fate of another captive, the partner of her passion and her tragedy, was in debate.

It would seem that as there were so many schemes for Mary's marriage in which she herself acquiesced that either her union with Bothwell was considered null, or a divorce from him was judged easily obtainable. Moray had endeavoured to settle the question by depriving Bothwell of his life as well as of his goods. When he heard that the desperate and ruined man had been driven by tempests on to the Danish coasts, he demanded from the Danish King, Frederick II, whose daughter was afterwards to marry Mary's son, the surrender of Bothwell that he might answer for his crimes.

For some reason that is obscure, Frederick II refused to comply, basing his denial of Moray's demands on the grounds that Bothwell had assured him that he had been legally acquitted of the murder of the King and that only the mischance of a storm had cast him into Denmark. Frederick II would, of course, have found these feeble excuses if he had wished to oblige Moray, but he was evidently indifferent on this point and must have felt some compassion for this wild, elegant ruffian who had so soon exhausted Fortune's patience. He did not, however, give him his liberty, but lodged him as a prisoner in his Castle of Bergen. An account of Bothwell's last adventures is given later in this narrative.

As it was against Moray's interests for Mary to marry again, and therefore highly convenient for him to have this figment of a husband in the background, it is possible that the demand for Bothwell was merely made by the astute Regent to satisfy popular

feeling and that he arranged secretly with Frederick II to keep the unhappy Bothwell a prisoner—a fate far more cruel than death for one who had so loved power and the lusts of the flesh.

Whether by Moray's connivance or no, Mary's misfortunes were thus completed by the possession of a husband whom it was most unlikely she would ever see again, and yet from whom, as she afterwards proved, it was not so easy to set herself free. We do not know whether she received news of his fate while she was in Lochleven. Deeply concerned as she was in her own plight, involved in schemes for escape and employed in securing George Douglas to her service, it is likely enough that she gave no thought to the man who had once moved her so deeply. If any vows of fidelity had been exchanged at Carberry Hill field they were out of mind as were his services after the Rizzio murder, which Mary had declared "we can never forget".

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In her smuggled letters to France the captive complained bitterly of the strait manner in which she was kept. These lamentations must have been considerably, though not unnaturally, exaggerated, for not only was she able to send these letters abroad, but to contrive her escape and an insurrection on her behalf. She could not have been so strictly guarded for she was in communication with George Douglas, who, though banished from Lochleven, was lodging at a small village, Kinross, on the borders of the lake, and with John Beaton, brother of the Archbishop, who in their turn were in touch with the restless and dissatisfied nobles who had not accepted Moray's regency with a good grace. These included the turbulent Huntly, who had played false with everyone, the Hamiltons, Argyll, and two noblemen who were always notable for their devotion to their Queen—Lord Herries and Lord Seton. While Mary was writing to Catherine de' Medici "so closely am I watched that I have no leisure but while they dine or when they sleep for their girls go to sleep with me, and if you do not take me by force I shall never go from hence, of that I am sure", a plot for her escape was evolved without, it seems, much difficulty.

Not only had she in her service the young George Douglas, who, according to Melville, was "lost in a phantasy of love with her", but another boy, William Douglas, a retainer of the family, who remained in the Castle and was also in the scheme for the escape.

James Melville says that Margaret Douglas herself was supposed to connive at the plot. If she did not do so, it is difficult to see how it could have been carried out.

Willie Douglas, in his capacity of page or servant at Lochleven, contrived to steal the keys while the family was at supper. Mary slipped out with Mary Seton and took a boat with Willie Douglas, locking all the doors and gates behind her after spoiling the other boats of their furniture. When she reached the shores of the loch George Douglas met her. With him was Alexander Hepburn, the Lord of Riccartoun, or Riccarton, Bothwell's friend and kinsman, who had been sent as his forerunner to plead his cause with the Queen during the Earl's first exile in France. The sight of him must have surely awokened curious memories in Mary's mind if she were not incorrigibly shallow-hearted and egotistical. It is indeed said that she tried to get a message through him to Bothwell. This report is given in Tyler's history of Scotland, but is not confirmed. Tyler says that the Queen begged Sir Robert Melville to take a letter to Bothwell and, on his refusal, threw the epistle into the fire.

An elaborate account of Mary's escape is given in the dispatch of the Venetian envoy in Paris to the Signory; he had his facts from John Beaton.

After travelling a few miles the Queen was met by Lord Seton, "a very brave gentleman", and one of the Hamiltons with thirty horse; another small reinforcement under Claude Hamilton soon joined the fugitive, and she was taken to Niddry, where Lord Herries met her and escorted her to the Castle Hamilton, where the Archbishop of St. Andrews, who had played such a dubious part in Mary's story, welcomed her and acknowledged her as his Queen, as indeed did all the nobility and gentry who now gathered around her, it being tacitly agreed between them that the abdication had been obtained by force and was, therefore, null; and this despite the fact that Lindsay and Ruthven had sworn the contrary at the coronation of James VI.

With the gathering of the clansmen round Mary's standard the whole country was in arms and split into two factions—Queen's men and King's men. Mary showed courage and promptitude; she entrusted the faithful John Beaton with a letter for France in which she demanded help from her brother-in-law, Charles IX, and for her immediate needs a thousand harquebusiers with which to begin operations.

She wrote also a diplomatic letter to her uncle, the famous Cardinal, soliciting his help and compassion and tactfully acknowledging the past errors of her youth and promising to amend them in the future. It was not often that Mary admitted herself in the wrong. Writing to this Prince of the Church she also protested her firm purpose to live and die a Catholic.

In a week she had nearly six thousand men gathered round her standard in Castle Hamilton, four leagues from Dumbarton on the coast, and her hopes must have risen high. The Regent had nothing near this number of men, and surrounded by the clamorous loyalty of the Roman Catholic Lords she could probably easily have been persuaded, impulsive and imprudent as she was, that the whole country was on her side. It could not have been difficult for the passionate and impetuous woman to delude herself that she was already redeemed from her squalor, misery, and dishonour and once more crowned Queen of Scotland with the old Faith triumphant in the country. Her joy and her relief at what must have seemed to her an almost miraculous escape, the pleasure of freedom and high hopes for the future, must have given her a glow and a charm, a grace and a spirit that went far to consolidate the loyalty of those who had gathered about her in numbers that showed the scandals of last year were beginning to grow dim in the minds of at least some of her subjects.

Moray, however, was not a prince easily surprised nor quietly defeated. In the name of Mary's son, King James, then not two years old, he issued a proclamation from Glasgow, where he was holding an assize, calling to him all "loyal subjects armed with fifteen days' provision for the preservation of the King's person and authority and the establishment of quietness".

Mary's proclamation, issued in reply to this, has, like almost every other document which discredits the Queen of Scots, been declared a forgery. Violent as the wording is, there is, however, no reason on that account to doubt Mary's authorship. She was known to be passionate and vindictive, and, whatever her degree of innocence or guilt, she would feel furious wrath towards those who had brought her down. She had had ten months of imprisonment in which to brood over her wrongs; the terror and shame of that day in Edinburgh when in fear of the stake she had hysterically clamoured at the window of the Provost's House must have burnt deep into her memory. If the proclamation be her own and was really issued, it is characteristic of her recklessness, because after this she could

scarcely hope for a perhaps necessary compromise with Moray, whom she named "Beastly traitor", "a bastard gotten in shameful adultery". This last insult does not look as if the captive Queen had really been so friendly with Lady Margaret Douglas, nor as if she had ever intended to marry her son.

As to Moray's supporters, Mary's reference to them breathes hate and vengeance and was not calculated to win them back to their loyalty to her. She terms them "Pestiferous factions", "shameless butchers", "hellhounds, bloody tyrants, common murderers, and cutthroats, whom no prince, yea, not the barbarous Turks their perpetrated murder could pardon or spare".

Some of the Lords, notably Morton, answered perhaps well enough to these epithets. The proclamation terms Lethington an "unworthy traitor"; the Queen may have been deceived on this point.

Mary's final glitter of fortune was brief. On the second of May she had escaped from Lochleven, and on the twelfth of that month she was defeated at Langside. Moray's army, though smaller, was better organized, he had at least one good general—Kirkcaldy of Grange, while Mary seems to have had no man of trained ability, though she had the holders of many great names—Argyll, Cassilis, Eglinton, Rothes, Herries, Yester, and "many others".

John Wood, Moray's secretary, writing to Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, notes drily "our advance guards having reconnoitred with spears, it was hard fighting for more than a large quarter of an hour, and then, with the slaughter of six-score or thereby of the chief Hamiltons, they were overthrown, and because we were almost all on foot the chase was not great".

Archibald Campbell, fifth Earl of Argyll, was in command of the royal troops; it was reported that he was seized by an attack of epilepsy in the heat of the engagement.

Sir James Melville's "Memoirs" declare that Mary was overpersuaded into this fatal engagement and that she desired to retire to Dumbarton and slowly make her way in her subject's affections and draw them back to their old allegiance. But this cautious plan was opposed by the Archbishop of St. Andrews and other members of the House of Hamilton, who were rendered confident by the large numbers under their command. It was Melville's surmise that the Archbishop wished to marry Mary

to Lord Hamilton and "rule all" by this means after a general massacre or imprisonment of the Lennox faction. Mary would not have gained much even by a victory at Langside. A fifth miserable marriage and the part of puppet in the hands of the Hamiltons, all of whom were poor, ambitious, greedy, and incapable, with a country distracted by civil war in the background, would surely have been a fate worse than imprisonment at Lochleven. The country was saved from what would have been, for Scotland, the disastrous restoration of Mary, by Moray's victory.

If what Melville says about Mary's wishing to see Lethington and Grange—the two men for whom she had asked at Carberry Hill—and her desire to come to some concord with Moray and his party is authentic, either her violent proclamation is forged, or was not issued, or she was extraordinarily fickle. How could she hope to make pact or agreement with men whom she had immediately before so furiously insulted and branded as villains and traitors?

There were to be some more battles undertaken on Mary's behalf, but she was never again to see men in arms advancing under her standard. She gazed her last at this manner of spectacle from some heights overlooking Langside; it is said that she rode into the battle to encourage her men, but found them at blows among themselves. Then, seeing the day lost for her, her courage which had been so brilliant and so high, broke. She turned with Lord Herries and sixteen followers and fled. She had lost everything but life, it was to save her mere existence that she rode without pause for ninety miles from Langside to Queenshill Dundrennan (so named from this incident) near Kirkcudbright.

The frantic flight she describes in her own words to her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine: "I have endured injuries, calumnies, imprisonment, famine, cold, heat, flight, not knowing whither ninety-two miles across the country without supping or alighting. And then I have had to sleep upon the ground and drink sour milk and eat oatmeal without bread and have been three nights like the owls, without a female, in this country."

She was quite ruined, broken and overwhelmed, she would not again entrust herself to her subjects, as she had done after Carberry Hill. She had no hope of again moving her brother by tears or lamentations; it was the stake she dreaded, the fiery

death in the market-place. At her first pause she cut off her rich hair, shaving her head as close as possible, and muffled herself in a common disguise.

It was on May 15th at Dundrennan, the first halt after that desperate ride, that Mary wrote a moving appeal to Queen Elizabeth, whose friendly concern on her behalf she remembered with relieved gratitude. Here, at least, surely was one powerful friend. "I am now forced out of my kingdom and driven to such state that next to God I have no hope but in your goodness." The concluding sentence of this letter reads: "To remind you of the reasons I have to depend on England, I send back to its Queen this token, the jewel of her promised friendship and assistance." This is supposed to refer to the diamond or crystal of the double heart Elizabeth had once sent to Mary, and which that Queen now returned to emphasize her pathetic appeal. Mary may have had this jewel with her at Lochleven or it may have been brought her by one of the nobles who joined her before Langside, and it is possible that she wore it in her bosom, where she had the habit of keeping costly tokens, and that she broke the gem, sending half and keeping half.

The incident is characteristic of the graciousness and tact this wilful and impetuous woman could exercise when she chose.

It was Lord Herries, whose selfless devotion to the Queen formed one of the brighter episodes of her history (yet he signed the famous Ainslie Tavern Bond), who was her guide on this terrible ride; Lord Seton had been captured at Langside. The objective of Herries was his own house of Terregles, in Galloway, and he was able to evade possible pursuit by his knowledge of the wild country. The troop of sixteen people went through lonely passes and unfrequented byways.

It was Lord Herries who was reported to have asked the Queen "why she would not remain in Scotland and trust to a better fortune in the future?" Mary replied "it was impossible for her to remain in any part of her realm, not knowing whom to trust". If she said these words she spoke a bitter truth. There was no decision nor energy nor even much courage shown among those who had rallied round her standard at Langside. The Hamiltons and all their followers were, as a contemporary said, neither of "great foresight nor force". About three hundred of Mary's followers seem to have been killed and the rest surrendered or scattered after her flight.

At Terregles there was a hasty consultation as to what Mary's future policy should be. As she had resolved not to remain in Scotland there were only two courses open to her —she might endeavour to get to the continent or she might throw herself on Elizabeth's protection.

She decided instantly to do the last and it has been described as one of the greatest blunders of her life, revealing an extraordinary lack of knowledge of character, a complete misunderstanding of Elizabeth, and a foolish trust in that Queen's friendship and her promises of a year before. But surely Mary's intelligence need not be so severely questioned in her resolution to throw herself on the protection of Elizabeth. What else could she do? Flying for her life from her own subjects, twice defeated, without a battle, in an open contest for her Crown, it was imperative for her to decide quickly where she must go. She must have believed that Moray's troops were in pursuit and that this time there would be no mercy shown, not even the grim mercy of a prison.

A flight to France had many objections, among them some more practicable than Mary's natural wish not to appear as a hunted, penniless fugitive in a country which she had left in all state and honour as a Queen. Where was she to find a ship whose officers she could trust to take her to France? How was she to be sure that she would escape tempests, pirates, enemies in the crossing from Scotland to France, always an adventure under the best of circumstances? Supposing she overcame this difficulty, what reception could she expect from Catherine de' Medici who had expressed so clearly and so harshly her opinion of the King's murder and the Bothwell marriage, and who had never loved nor liked her? What reliance could she have placed in the support or countenance of the Lorraine Cardinal, absorbed in the religious wars that then distracted France? The very best that she could have hoped for from a flight to France, and this under the most fortunate circumstances, would have been a retreat into a convent. Mary was twenty-four years old and in no mind for religious seclusion.

There was Spain, an even more dubious place of refuge, and more difficult to reach; the ruling powers there were more unknown to her, bound to her by no ties of kinship nor of marriage. Philip II might have shown friendliness to a powerful Queen of Scots and even wished for her hand for his son,

but what use could he make of this fugitive, discrowned, dishonoured woman who was not even free to marry?

Mary was also, and must have known it, out of favour with the Vatican, despite her protestations of loyalty to the Roman Catholic faith. She had married a heretic and she had been politically a failure; through her follies and faults, mismanagements and blunders, Scotland had been delivered over finally to the Reformation. To whom then could she look if not to the Queen of England, whose country was near at hand, whose promises had been the fairest, and in whose realm there might be a chance not only of once more meddling over the borders with Scottish affairs, but even of securing her own succession to the English Crown? Mary can scarcely be accused of a foolish blunder in entrusting herself to Elizabeth, nor credited with a generous impulsive misreading of that Queen's character. No doubt she was perfectly well aware of what Elizabeth's feelings would be towards her, but she was prepared to play her own game—pit her arts and her wits against those of the Queen of England.

She did not suspect that she would be imprisoned or treated as harshly as she was, in the outcome of the adventure, to be, but it must be remembered that her calculation did not go so far wrong. Not once but twice and thrice did she nearly succeed by her presence and intrigues in England in raising revolts which might easily have cost Elizabeth her crown and even her life and the Protestant religion its ascendancy in England.

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Admitting these reasonings, Mary's flight to England seems not only the best thing she could have done in her desperate straits, but the best thing for her own interests that could have been thought of, and knowing her character and her former history, and judging her in the light of after events, it is incredible to suppose that even in this moment of her deepest distress and fear she visualized herself as a passive recipient of protection and charity at Elizabeth's Court. She was still, in her own estimation and in that of all the Roman Catholics of Europe, Queen of England, and it must have occurred to her that during a residence in that country it would go hard with her if she did not make good her claim. At the very worst, she could not fail to be in England a person of precedence, of importance, of immense prestige and sentimental interest,

first Princess of the Blood and heiress to the throne, even in the regard of the Protestants, a descendant of Henry VII. Whereas, on the continent, she would have been but a widowed, discrowned Queen, and even she had surely sufficient political sagacity to realize that it would be almost impossible to goad either France or Spain to give her a sufficient army to put her once more on her Scottish throne.

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Mary's last night in Scotland was spent at Terregles, on May 15th. On the next day she and her few followers entered a small fishing boat and after a four hours crossing of the Solway arrived at Workington. At Workington Hall Sir Henry Curwen received them with respect and courtesy. The Earl of Northumberland, Lord Warden of the County, announced Mary's arrival to the Council of York. The instructions given to the officials of the County by that body were ominous. The Scottish Queen and her company were to be used honourably, but not one of them was to escape.

From Workington Mary, now relieved from any fear of death or further disgrace, her spirits rising once more in the friendliness that surrounded her and the relief from her worst terrors, wrote another letter to Elizabeth in which she put her case, going back to the Rizzio murder and that of her husband "falsely charged" upon her, and declaring that the Abdication was forced from her under scar of death.

She declared that she had been willing to invite Moray and his friends "to return to their duty" under specious promises of "reforming everything", but that her messenger had been seized, also her proclamation. Was this her blast of fury or another?

She added the reason for that frantic ride of ninety miles: "They stationed people in every direction either to kill or to take me."

Mary wanted Elizabeth to assist her in her "just quarrel", but she had other and more womanly needs. "I am in a pitiable condition, not only for a Queen but for a gentlewoman, for I have nothing in the world but what I had on my person when I made my escape."

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The news that the Queen of Scotland was in England caused Elizabeth the most bitter uneasiness and embarrassment, however glad she had been to hear of Mary's escape from

the rebels. Though she has been universally blamed for her treatment of Mary it must be allowed that her position was one of cruel difficulty. She had pledged herself to support Mary as a fellow Queen, as a fellow woman she disliked and mistrusted her. Mary had, whatever view might be taken of her case, caused broils and troubles enough in Scotland and was likely to cause the same in England. She would inevitably become the focus and the rallying-point not only for the Roman Catholics but for all Elizabeth's discontented subjects, and, although she was not likely to mention the matter, she must have in her head the prospect not only of obtaining again her Scottish Crown, but of being declared the heiress to that of England. Elizabeth too was on good terms with Moray, to whom she had lent money and from whom she was soon to purchase many of Mary's pearls and gems.

Elizabeth's temper cannot have been improved if she heard of the warm reception given to Mary when she entered Cockermouth, and the honour that was being done her in Cockermouth Hall, which belonged to a wealthy merchant by the name of Henry Fletcher. This gentleman behaved to the fugitive Queen with great courtesy and presented her with thirteen yards of crimson velvet to make a robe; the amount considered necessary for a gown shows the cumbersome nature of the dresses in those days. Tradition says that the Queen was still in such fear of her life and so little recovered from the shock of the defeat of Langside that while at Cockermouth Hall she did not sleep but passed the night attired and alert in a closet.

Mary was immediately moved, by order of the High Sheriff, to Carlisle. Here she was taken to the Castle and put in charge of Sir Richard Lowther, the Deputy-Governor, the seventh Earl of Northumberland being considered too friendly to the fugitive to be allowed to keep her under his protection.

Mary held some sort of Court at Carlisle Castle, the neighbouring gentry, who were largely Roman Catholic, waiting upon her to show their respect. Here she was joined also by other fugitives from Scotland; these included such important people as Bishop John Lesley, and members of the family of Livingstone and Fleming. Mary Seton, the last of the Queen's Maries, the only one who had not married, was with the Queen at Carlisle, where she must have joined her, as Mary in her letter to Queen Elizabeth says she had no female in her flight.

By her skill, and no doubt with the help of the ladies of the neighbourhood, Mary contrived periwigs of different colour and arrangement which disguised the head shorn in her terror and fear after her flight from Langside, and excited the admiration of those who waited upon the fair Queen.

Among these was Thomas Howard, fourth Duke of Norfolk, grandson of the poet Earl of Surrey, the premier noble of England, and in the estimation of his own class and times, a Prince, a Protestant popular in England and beloved by his friends; he was a man of no decision, energy, or boldness of character, though he was young and accomplished, but if his portrait (which has the unhappy air of a likeness) in the National collection can be believed, he had a singularly unprepossessing appearance, which is supported by a comment of one of Mary's servants.

Mary received him gladly, realizing the importance of such an ally, and the young Duke on his side was deeply impressed by the grace and beauty of this Queen with such a tragic and romantic history. Sir Richard Lowther was fined and superseded by Elizabeth for permitting Norfolk to visit the Queen.

Neither the Queen of England nor her adviser, Cecil, could make up their minds what to do and, as was their general policy, decided on procrastination. Two Privy Councillors were sent to take Lowther's place—Norfolk's own brother-in-law, Lord Scrope, and Sir Francis Knollys, a relation of Elizabeth through the Bullens.

They had no precise instructions, but were merely to note all Mary said and did and send a report to their mistress.

The faithful Lord Herries went out to meet the Englishmen on the way and did his best to prejudice them in his mistress' favour by dwelling on her suffering, the cruelties she had received from her enemies, and assuring them of her innocence of the King's murder.

However well she might be treated in Carlisle and however pleasant it was to be among friendly and respectful people again, Mary, if one may believe her letters to Charles IX, was under no delusions as to her fate and prospects. In this letter she speaks of the extremity of her misery.

"I will not weary you with long lamentations, but I have been treated the most unworthily that ever a princess was and with the most injustice, and calumniated the most falsely. And not only

that but put in danger of my life, if God had not had pity on my innocence and in witness of their falsity had not saved me from their hands.

"I implore you, remember my necessity and help me."

Lord Herries had asked of Knollys and Scrope either an interview for Mary with Elizabeth, help against the Scotch rebels, or a safe conduct into France. None of these things was granted.

When Mary received the two Englishmen in Carlisle Castle she again and in much passion put her case before them. The impression she made on Knollys, an acute and trained observer, who was quite unprejudiced and who had never seen Mary before and whose sole business it was to report upon her, is of great importance.

Elizabeth's two envoys had been instructed to hint to Mary, if not definitely to state, that Elizabeth could not receive her—a personal interview was what Mary most desired—until she had cleared herself of any shadow of guilt in the murder of her husband. This was rather like one of the provisos in old fairy tales—the waters to be taken up with a sieve or the grain be sifted from the ashes before a certain desired privilege could be enjoyed. Elizabeth must have known perfectly well that it was practically impossible for Mary to *prove* her innocence of the King's murder unless she was to be allowed a long and confidential interview with Elizabeth or an open and exhaustive trial.

The joint letter from Scrope and Knollys dated "Carlisle, May 29th", describes Mary as having "an eloquent tongue and a discreet head, and it seems by her doings she hath stout courage and liberal heart adjoined thereto".

Disappointment at not being accorded an interview with Elizabeth had brought tears to Mary's eyes. She protested her innocence once more and accused Morton and Lethington of the murder at Kirk o' Field.

The two Englishmen stood firm before this grief and passion and replied that their mistress could not do Mary "that great honour to admit her solemnly and worthily into your presence by reason of this great slander of murder whereof she was not yet purged".

Mary "discontentedly contented" herself with this, and with sending Lord Herries with letters to Elizabeth.

The account from the two Privy Councillors included a warning. Mary was in their opinion, as Elizabeth must from the first have feared she would be, already a danger. "Many gentlemen of divers shires here adjoining within your realm, have heard her daily defences and excuses of her innocence with her great accusations of her enemies very eloquently told."

Mary was, the two envoys thought, moving and even winning over these North Country gentlemen. At the same time, Scrope and Knollys could not make any suggestion as to what was to be done with her for her own safety and Elizabeth's honour. They did not think that Mary would dare to go back to Scotland, for it was not likely that Moray would allow her to escape to France and it would not be creditable to Elizabeth to detain the fugitive as a prisoner, at least, "not so rigorously but that, with devices of towels or toys at her chamber window or elsewhere in the night a body of her agility and spirit may escape soon being so near the Border. And surely to have her carried farther into the realm is the highway to a dangerous position as I suppose."

In brief, would it not be better to allow Mary, loosely guarded, to escape over the Border again and face her fate if she could be induced to do so, instead of bringing her into the centre of England, where she would be likely to raise admiration, pity, and allegiance?

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On the 30th of May Sir Francis Knollys wrote by himself a letter in which he explains how he had delicately touched on the murder charge which was supposed to blast all Mary's hopes of seeing Elizabeth. He found his chance when she began her "ordinary inveighing against my lord Moray and his adherents". Knollys said warily that "princes might be deposed if they fell into madness", and added, "what difference is there between lunacy and cruel murdering, for one is an evil humour the proceeding of melancholy, and the other is an evil humour the proceeding of rage and choler? Therefore the question is whether Your Grace deserves to be put from the government or not, for if Your Grace is guilty of any such odious crime as deserves disposal then, said I, how shall they be blamed who have deposed you?"

Mary then wept and began her usual defences, thus warding off Knollys' attack and making him instead, as he wrote, "com-

fort her" until she declared that it was time to close up her letters to Elizabeth and so escaped into her bedchamber.

Lord Herries and Lord Fleming proceeded to London with these appeals from Mary in which she once more requested either Elizabeth's succour and countenance or permission to go to France, or at least to send Fleming there on her behalf.

Elizabeth began to temporize, sending letters both to Moray and to Mary. Her letter to the unfortunate Queen of Scots is evasive and far from straightforward: "Much," declared Elizabeth, "as she desired to know Mary cleared, she could never be careless of her own reputation, and it was impossible for her to see Mary until she was cleared and honourably acquitted of this crime."

Mary received this letter, which was sent by Henry Middlemore, with great passion and weeping. She must have longed to make some stinging retort, the names of Leicester and Amy Robsart must have come near her lips and indeed the letter which she wrote in reply on June 8th shows some indignation among the entreaties for succour. "Dismiss, madame, from your mind the idea that I came hither to save my life, neither the world nor all Scotland has cast me out, but to recover my honour and to obtain support to enable me to chastise my false accusers, not to answer them as their equal, for I know they ought not to enter into engagements against their Sovereign, but to accuse them before you, have I chosen you among all other princes as my nearest kinswoman and perfect friend, doing as if I supposed it an honour to be called the Queen's restorer, who hoped to receive this kindness from you, giving you the honour and the glory all my life, making you also thoroughly acquainted with my innocence and how falsely I have been led. I see, to my great regret, that I have been mistaken."

After justifying herself with much courage and spirit, Mary goes on to write:

"I must speak to you without dissimulation. You have admitted into your presence a bastard brother of mine who fled from me and you refuse me that favour, and I feel assured that the juster my cause the longer it will be delayed, for it is the remedy of a bad cause to stop the mouths of each adversary."

This passionate and eloquent letter in which Mary demanded nothing that it did not seem fair to grant, the help, or the interview, or the leave to depart, did not move Elizabeth nor change the heart of Cecil. Mary began to realize that she had saved

her life, but little else, and on June 21st wrote her letter of bitter lamentation to the Cardinal of Lorraine in which she said : "If you have not pity upon me now, it is all over with my son, my country, and myself."

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Sir Francis Knollys was something moved on Mary's behalf; her passionate protestations, her tears, her grace and beauty had affected him as it affected so many others. He appealed to Cecil "to deal with this lady plainly, without colours and cloaks that hide no man's eyes but those that are blind". In the same letter he gave his little sketch of the fugitive Queen : "This lady and princess is a notable woman, she seems to regard no ceremonious honour except the acknowledging of her regal estate. She speaks much, is bold, pleasant, and very familiar; she shows a great desire to be revenged on her enemies, and a readiness to expose herself to all perils in hope of victory. She delights much to hear of hardiness and valiancy commanding by name all approved hardy men of her country, although they be her enemies. She commands no cowardice, even in her friends. The thing that most she thirsts after is victory, and it seems to be indifferent to her how her enemies diminish, either by the sword of her friends or by the liberal promises and rewards of her purse, or by divisions and quarrels raised among themselves so that for victory's sake pain and perils seem pleasant unto her and in respect of victory, wealth and all things seem to be contemptuous and vile."

The second part of Mary's story comes naturally to an end at Carlisle, when she first realized that she had changed one prison for another. Her fortunes had passed their climax, her life had come to a pause; she was caught and chained and was to remain so for the rest of her weary days.

Her hopes were, however, eager and strong at Carlisle; she dreamed not only of liberty, but of revenge. Sir Francis noted her with apprehension as she began "to refresh and amend much". It was "well to be considered what to do with a lady of such a spirit". Mary was better thought of in England than she had been in Scotland; here she was not a fallen Princess "soiled from the embraces of her grooms", but something of a heroine, wronged, persecuted, and in deep distress. One, too, of an amazing courage, "she would rather that all her party were hanged, than submit to Moray . . . she would go to Turkey rather than not be revenged on him". She had

changed since, cornered and helpless, she had fawned on her half-brother for her life at Lochleven, wept and excused herself to him, begged him to accept the Regency and all her goods.

Elizabeth was at a loss; there were "bands at Berwick and French ships swarm at sea"; there was fear of a Scotch invasion, of a landing of foreign troops. Cecil played for time, while Mary, furious at these delays and Elizabeth's cold letters wished she "had broke her arm before ever she had come to England".

Part III

ENGLAND

1567—1587

“ Why should ye be stricken any more? Ye will revolt more and more. The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. . . . Thy silver is become dross, thy wine mixed with water.”

The Book of the Prophet Isaiah.

III

ENGLAND

1567—1587

IT would be tedious to dwell at length on the last nineteen years of Mary's life. This history is well-known, monotonous, painful, and shows Mary in but two parts repeated with poignant persistence—that of suppliant and that of intriguer. Cut off from action and from freedom she could only utter cries for help and spin furtive and futile plots. With all her endeavours she was unsuccessful, and in the end, after heart-breaking alternations of hope and fear, she paid the price the times exacted for political failure.

It is not proposed here to give details of her long imprisonment, although many of these, some fact, tradition, and some legend, are obtainable. Nothing much altered either in the policies of Europe, the relations of England and Scotland, the intentions of Elizabeth, or the character of Mary during these nineteen years. All Mary's fortune was at a pause, a state of inaction and suspense. The sensual, violent, cruel drama of Mary's life had ended at Carlisle—this Queen of twenty-four had nothing more to experience but misery. A brief relation will suffice for a chronicle of the bloody events through which Mary and the men who were involved in her story had to pass before she, almost the last of those involved in Henry Stewart's murder, herself knelt in the Hall of Fotherinhay.

Moray, as able, as brave and as energetic as Mary with far more self-control and judgment, instantly countered his half-sister's appeal to Elizabeth by the production of the "casket letters". With adroit subtlety he and the Lords, chief among whom may be reckoned Earl Morton, had spread rumours of these same letters throughout Europe, but they had neither published nor shown them and perhaps had never intended to

do so. Bold as Moray was, he was also prudent, a man who would always play for safety. As long as Mary had remained in a Scotch prison no one would have heard any more of the "casket letters", but, with her flight to England, these documents became Moray's one weapon against Elizabeth's possible help of Mary as a suppliant, fugitive Queen, and Elizabeth's probable rage against himself as a rebel. He had already experienced her sharp rebukes when, confident of her assistance, he had before raised his standard against his half-sister. He knew, therefore, from stinging experience, that Elizabeth would not easily tolerate a rebelling subject and he was aware that only through her toleration and recognition of his Regency could he maintain his government in Scotland.

Moray, therefore, was in a difficult and delicate position. He had to placate Elizabeth, he had to explain to her why he had forced Mary to an Act of Abdication which she now repudiated, and he had to obtain, if not Elizabeth's active help, at least her neutrality. He had been all his life on and off a pensioner of England, but he could not openly admit the overlordship of the Sovereign of England, an English pretension which had been dealt with once and for all at Bannockburn. Therefore, Elizabeth's right to meddle in Scottish affairs must not be recognized, but she must be induced to acquiesce tacitly, at least, in the dethronement of Mary and the reign of her son under the Regency of Moray.

To accomplish this end Moray produced the "casket letters". In doing so he and his Lords acted with unscrupulous inconsistency. It is not certain whether Moray himself had connived at Darnley's murder, though it is most probable that he did so. But, at least, he must have known that a fair number of the Lords who were then supporting him had had a hand in that crime. This did not deter him nor Morton nor any man among them from fixing the entire blame of the murder on to Mary. When they had first taken the field against her they had declared that it was to liberate her from Bothwell, who had forcibly seized her and constrained her to marry him, and this regardless of the fact that they had signed the Bond promising to aid Bothwell in this very marriage. Then, at Carberry Hill they had allowed Bothwell to escape when they could easily have seized him and punished him for the insolent villain they affected to believe he was, and imprisoned Mary, to whom hitherto they had given no blame. Now that Mary had escaped and was a potential

menace to them in the hands of Elizabeth, they again changed their tactics and, producing the letters, which they said had come into their possession a few days after Carberry Hill, definitely accused Mary of the murder of her husband, explaining their signing of the Ainslie Bond by declaring that they had been overawed by Bothwell's retainers.

These casket documents were backed up by a long, elaborate indictment that Lennox, burning for revenge, had eagerly got together against Mary, and the depositions of some underlings who had been seized by Moray and, after some sort of mock trial, beheaded. These obscure and unhappy wretches were Hay of Tala, Bowton, Powrie, and Dalgleish, Bothwell's chamber-child who, according to Morton, told him where to find the casket.

Their "confessions" throw no light whatever on the mystery of Darnley's murder. None of them admitted being present at the actual strangling. Bothwell's servant, Powrie, had helped to carry the powder to Kirk o' Field and no more. Tala had seen the powder placed in Mary's room under Darnley's. They were examined before the Lords of the secret Council and their evidence was, naturally, seeing these same Lords were many of them the accomplices of the prisoners, so tampered with as to be worthless.

It is said on the authority of Drury that Hay of Tala, making a dying speech on the scaffold, incriminated not only the Queen and Bothwell, but, having lost all hope of life, Huntly, Argyll, and Lethington, with several others. But this dying "confession" was not put in with the other evidence at York and Westminster.

Moray, of course, was in the position of being able to forge and tamper with and arrange the evidence as best suited himself.

George Buchanan, the famous Latinist who had been Mary's flatterer and tutor, was engaged to write the "Detectio", the first draft of which he was putting together in 1568, largely from materials supplied by Lennox. This entirely unreliable diatribe against Mary was used with deadly effect by her enemies at the time of its publication. Modern research, however, has shown it to be so full of gross inaccuracies and careless errors that the slanderous stories contained therein have, by their very exaggeration, done Mary's cause more good than harm.

Stravenage, in his little history of Mary dedicated to her son, makes an apology for Buchanan. "What George Buchanan

had written thereof as well in his history as in a pamphlet called ' Detectio ' is known to all men by these printed books. But since he, carried away with carnal affection and with the gifts of Moray wrote in that manner, these books were condemned as falsehoods by the Estates of the Realm of Scotland unto whom more credit must be given. And he himself lamented and bewailed unto the King, whose schoolmaster he was, proving himself oftentimes, as I have heard, that he had written so spitefully against the well-deserving Queen that his best wish was that he might have lived so long that he might wipe out with a recantation or with his blood, the spots and stains he had falsely made upon her. But that, he said, would be to no purpose since he would seem to date for old age."

However this may be, it is possible that Buchanan acted sincerely in the composition of his books and trusted in the materials supplied to him by Moray and Lennox. And the fact that many of his charges against Mary have been proved false, and others are grotesque and gross in the extreme, does not prove that there is no foundation of truth in much of what he says. That is the deadly part of slander, gossip and scandal—they *may* be true.

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Mary's attitude towards her official accusers is, like all this mysterious affair, irritatingly obscure. Lord Herries went to London to plead her cause before Elizabeth. Moray, in company with Lethington and many other of the prominent Scots nobles arrived to state their side of the case.

Mary, still demanding either help from Elizabeth or her release that she might seek it elsewhere, that is from France, had been moved from Carlisle to Bolton, where she had received her apparel and jewels from Lochleven. This must have been a matter of personal pleasure for she had written to her uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, a month previously " send me some money, for I have not the wherewithal to buy either bread or chemise or a gown. The Queen has sent me a small supply of linen and plate and I have borrowed some, but I shall not be able to do so any more. You are involved in this humiliation."

Bolton Castle was a lonely fortress near Richmond, in Yorkshire, and probably selected by Elizabeth on account of its solitary position. There had been rumours of some trouble brewing on account of the captive Queen. Mary kept her own household about her and had in her company one who must have been

agreeable enough to her—Lady Scrope, a sister of the Duke of Norfolk, on whom the prisoner's hopes were now centring.

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Lord Herries returned to Bolton and informed his mistress that little was to be done with Elizabeth. If she helped at all it would be on her own terms, and these were likely to be hard. Mary, said Elizabeth, harking back to the old grievance, was to abandon all claim to the Crown of England, make no alliance with France, and even forego her Faith and adopt the Common prayer-book after the form of the English Church. In return, Elizabeth would, if Moray failed to make good his charges, help Mary to the restoration of her throne, even at the cost of sending an army for that end.

Mary agreed to accept these conditions; there was, indeed, nothing else she could do and she probably thought that once her liberty was by any means regained, she could repudiate her promises as she had repudiated the Abdication forced from her at Lochleven. She, no more than Moray, could accept the principle of Elizabeth's overlordship, nor could she, a Sovereign in her own right, be judged by any earthly tribunal. At the same time, she consented to have her case brought before a Commission of Elizabeth's Ministers, and a Conference to this end was open at York on the 4th of October, under the presidency of the Duke of Norfolk, while an armistice between King's men and Queen's men was called in Scotland.

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Mary was treated with gross injustice on this point at least, that she was not allowed to be present at the Conference and she was so far distant from York that, owing to the stormy weather and bad roads there was considerable delay in her Commissioners consulting with her. The chief of these, Herries, acquitted himself of his task in a lukewarm fashion which had the air of disbelief in the righteousness of his cause. Mary was not allowed to see the "casket letters" nor copies of them; if they were forgeries she could only have had a vague idea as to their contents, but she knew the charges against her clearly enough.

She instructed her representatives that, "if any such writings exist they are false and feigned, forged and invented by themselves, and you shall request the principals to be produced and that I myself should have inspection thereof and make answer thereto". She was, above all, anxious to make a personal appearance either before the Queen or the Conference or in any

public place. She seemed to think that once she had pleaded her cause herself she would be believed. No doubt she was trusting to her personality, her grace and charm, her eloquence and the pitiful spectacle of her youth and suffering that could not fail to impress the public mind.

Elizabeth took good care that Mary should have no such opportunity; her beauty and her eloquence were her best weapons and she was not to be allowed to use them. The English Lords saw the letters, took copies of them, and the proceedings dragged on in indeterminate intricacy.

The Duke of Norfolk had, from the moment he had seen Mary at Carlisle, espoused her cause, either from ambition or because he was fascinated by her person. And she had eagerly accepted this champion. But Norfolk was shocked and overwhelmed by the casket letters; he was an honest man but hesitant and of no great intellectual ability. Through his sister and by other means he was then in constant communication with Mary and she, who not so long before had bitterly lamented that she was not allowed to go "to sea with Bothwell in a boat and drift with the wind's will", was now prepared to place her heart and her fortunes at the feet of another Protestant husband.

Her own wish had been for a compromise, for which also Moray was ready enough. This was suggested: she would confirm him in the Regency, she would live like a Princess of the Blood with handsome revenues and retinues in England, she would marry Norfolk and regain some honourable status among women if not among Sovereigns.

It was Norfolk who objected to this scheme; it did not suit his ambition or his pride. He did not want the charge of murder and adultery against Mary merely hushed up—he wished her cleared. And he desired, no doubt, to leave the way open for her return to the Crown of Scotland, or her accession to that of England.

Mary then, under his advice, withdrew her hinted acceptance of a compromise and defied her brother and the Lords, saying that if they produced the letters against her she could produce proofs against them that they were the actual murderers, and this in black and white.

The Earl of Sussex, a wise and eminent nobleman, was appealed to by Cecil for his opinion of this extraordinary case and he thought that—"if the matter came to the proof" Mary would be able to prove her case better than would Moray. This

all seems very extraordinary. What possible proof, and in black and white, could Mary have had against Moray and the Lords? If, as Nau says in his "Memoirs" (that is to say, according to Mary's own statement through Nau), Bothwell gave her, before they parted at Carberry Hill, the bond for Darnley's murder signed by the Lords, it is incredible that she had been able to preserve it during those dreadful hours in the Provost's House at Edinburgh and her eleven months' imprisonment at Lochleven. The first thing the Lords would do would be to search her for any compromising documents. Supposing, however, that by some miracle she had been able to preserve this bond signed by all her enemies, or that in some most out-of-the-way fashion one of her adherents had been able to get hold of this document, either from Bothwell or one of his servants or friends, and to pass it to Mary since her escape from Lochleven and she, even during that wild flight of ninety miles, had been able to preserve it about her person, how was it that she did not at once produce it? She could have shown it to such faithful servants as she had, say Lord Herries, she could have told Elizabeth and Cecil that she possessed it, she could have produced it before men like Knollys and Scrope, she could have told her Commissioners to mention it as their trump card at the Conference.

But she did none of these things. Her answers to the charges are all vague, evasive generalizations.

Another point arises. If she had this proof of her enemies' guilt, proof which would at least to a certain extent clear herself, why did she not mention it in her letters to Charles IX, Catherine de' Medici, to the Cardinal of Lorraine, to Archbishop Beaton? Again and again she protests her innocence and rails against her slanderers, but never is there any mention of this most important proof "in black and white" she declared she could bring before Elizabeth's Commissioners if Moray dare produce the casket letters and documents.

Maitland of Lethington's behaviour adds to the mystery of this exasperating affair. If he was, as he himself said, and as many of his admirers maintain, Mary's secret champion, why did he not, when the letters were produced in his presence, at once protest that they were forgeries? If he was Mary's friend, this was an act of unpardonable cowardice on his part. If, on the other hand, he knew that the letters were forged and had, in fact, helped to forge them himself, why go to the pains of secretly insinuating to Norfolk that he need not be upset by this

hideous evidence against Mary, for the letters were probably false and he himself, Lethington, knew of many who could counterfeit her hand and was, in fact, himself able to do so?

It has been supposed that Maitland of Lethington, knowing his own complicity in the King's murder, did not wish to drive Mary to desperation because he was afraid that if she was utterly cornered she would accuse him. But, as has been argued above, what possible proofs could Mary have had that either Lethington or any of the Lords could have been afraid of? It seems impossible that she could have had anything but her bare word, which she had given over and over again already without much effect.

Maitland of Lethington, then, appeared to be working for the Norfolk marriage, either out of sheer love of intricate diplomatic *finesse* or because he really had hopes that out of Mary's fourth union might come some honourable solution of her miserable difficulties. Moray, on the other hand, did not wish his sister to marry the English Duke; another marriage might mean more children and certainly would mean more complications. Moray was a sincere, bigoted Protestant, Norfolk was also of the Reformed Faith—on this point, if on no other, the two men agreed, but one can hardly credit the report that Moray suggested to Norfolk that they should "rule the two countries between them".

The Conference was removed from York to Westminster, where Lord Herries made another feeble and rather half-hearted speech on Mary's behalf. The young Queen, fretting in anguish in the lonely Castle at Bolton again made a passionate demand to be allowed to confront her accusers in person. She longed for nothing so much as to appear in the presence of the nobility and the Ambassadors of other countries to prove her innocence and to make Elizabeth and these understand the invented calumnies of the rebels.

Her demands were just and put forward with a noble and touching eloquence, but still she used nothing but words, there is no hint of "the proof in black and white" which surely at this moment would have been invaluable to her.

Although Mary was denied access to Elizabeth, that Queen received and consulted with, long and privately, Moray. It is likely that these two, despite the rebuffs that Elizabeth occasionally delivered to the Regent, understood each other and were good friends. They were both Protestants, of strong

mentality, and both had at heart something the same cause—the pacification of England and Scotland and the unification of those two countries against France and Spain; there was, in the woman of genius, and the man of talent, a keen instinct for statesmanship.

It should be noted and emphasized on behalf of Elizabeth that Moray in these interviews may have utterly convinced her of the truth of the "casket letters", and that he may have so represented to her Mary's behaviour that it was not possible for Elizabeth to doubt that Queen's guilt. There must have been much that Moray knew, much more that he could invent, that would have deeply impressed Elizabeth. Nor had he a difficult case.

When Mary had spoken of taking her cause before the King of France, Du Croc, a wise and friendly observer, had said it would be a pity if she should do that "for the facts were too well known". Only the greatest charity, the widest chivalry, could exonerate Mary, and Moray, speaking without charity or chivalry but with so much depending on his ability to convince Elizabeth of his half-sister's guilt, may have so convinced that shrewd listener.

The casket letters, if not genuine, are at least extremely clever forgeries, and one of them at least is damning evidence against Mary. We have seen that Elizabeth did disapprove of Mary's conduct; she had suspected her from the first and had said so, and she had warned her against the Bothwell marriage, she had menaced her with the loss of English friendship and the blasting of her own reputation. It could not, then, have been so very difficult to convince her that her suspicions and surmises had been correct, and it is quite possible that Moray, who must have been respected and even liked by Elizabeth and who was, according to the standard of his time, an honourable man, did so convince her, and that she believed firmly from the moment of these interviews and the production of the casket letters and the Conference at Westminster that Mary was light and cruel, violent and sensual, a murdereress, a wanton, a liar.

If such were Elizabeth's beliefs, her subsequent behaviour to Mary is consistent and even justified and not by any means so vile as Mary's defenders would paint it, but has a certain dignity and nobility.

On the other hand a slightly unpleasant incident which must have further strained the bitter relationship between the two

Queens took place in April, May 1568 and reflects no honour on Elizabeth. When Mary fled from Scotland Moray seems to have considered himself lawful heir to her famous jewels, entrusted to his care by his half-sister, which, from that date, began to be scattered, and he sold to Elizabeth for three thousand pounds some of Mary's treasures. They seem, even allowing for the value of money in the sixteenth century, to have been cheap. They consisted of six ropes of pearls, twenty-five others, more beautiful, loose and, possibly, a "lace" of great pearls.

This action on the part of Elizabeth seems as if greed, vanity and love of a good bargain had overcome fine feeling in the heart of the English Queen. She showed herself, on occasion, high minded and sensitive, and it is difficult to understand how she could have looked at the plundered splendour with an easy mind—"a sea of pearls, that some call tears". The transaction also points to a very close understanding between Moray and the English Queen. Were these jewels mentioned in the interview accorded Moray on the subject of the casket letters? Did the shrewd Scotsman conciliate Elizabeth with this tempting offer? Tempting it must have been if the pearls in question were, as has been supposed, the double twist that Mary is wearing in the Windsor Castle miniature (circa 1558-60).

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The Westminster Conference was dissolved in the middle of January without having reached any conclusion. Whatever Elizabeth's private opinions she wished to hold her public judgment in abeyance. She declared that nothing had been proved against the credit of Moray and the nobles, and nothing had been proved against Mary either. All these tedious and tiresome intrigues had, therefore, left the affair as obscure as it had been at the commencement, but the upshot of Elizabeth's policy was that she had determined to support Moray and his Regency and to keep Mary indefinitely a prisoner in England.

As far as Mary was concerned these conferences had ended in acute disappointment. She had not been condemned, neither had she been cleared; Moray had returned to Scotland as Regent, and she remained a prisoner in Bolton, Elizabeth would not see her, and from abroad there came no promises of aid.

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Elizabeth's instructions to Sir Henry Norris, her Ambassador in Paris, put forward very succinctly her position with Mary; Cecil's hand is probably in this dexterous document, which proves

that the English Court was very well informed as to Mary's private intentions and schemes. But there is no need to doubt Elizabeth's sincerity in these statements which were to be used to quieten any possible objections on the part of the French Court as to her treatment of a Queen Dowager of France.

Elizabeth was, above all, guided by principles of expediency, playing a perilous game with amazing skill, and all her statescraft revolved round Mary, not as a woman, but as a political entity; that does not however mean that she was not acting fairly towards her unhappy captive. Often glancing at the murder of "our nearest kinsman by the King our father's side, in Christendom", and Mary's subsequent marriage with "an abominable husband", the instructions state that Elizabeth had saved Mary's life (after Carberry Hill), and that since her "flying into this our realm, she hath been honourably uscd and waited on by noble personages". Elizabeth felt such compassion towards the desolate fugitive that she "utterly secluded and set apart" the old wrongs, even though one of these, the claim to the English Crown, was such as no Prince in any age would have forgiven.

Elizabeth then, the statement goes on, did her best to make some accord between Mary and her subjects and to gratify Lennox and his wife clamouring for revenge. She was diverted from this purpose, however, by the alarming evidence the Lords produced against Mary; she would, however, have glossed over all and endeavoured to do her best for Mary with Moray had not that Queen, while writing that she was entirely in Elizabeth's hands and would do nothing without her advice, been secretly intriguing for her own ends.

Here follows a strange story; Norfolk, bribed by the promise of Mary's hand, was induced to suppress evidence against her at the York Conference, and Moray was so menaced that he secretly agreed to the scheme. Indeed, he had not dared broach the matter to Elizabeth, and had, for his pains, only barely escaped murder on his return to Scotland. Mary had planned an immediate marriage with Norfolk and not only a restoration in Scotland, but an attempt on the English Crown. All this Norris was to put, not before the young Charles IX, but directly to the Queen Mother, whose judgment Elizabeth respected. All these plots had "begun in October and were not known to us before August". The document is couched in lofty language

and here and there touches grandeur, as when Elizabeth says "and truly right sorry are we, ay, half ashamed to be so misused by her whom we have benefited by the saving of her life". There is no flavour of hypocrisy about this document which relates much of what is known truth. As for the intrigues at York, it is impossible to know if Elizabeth here puts forward what she believed or if this was a concoction to satisfy the French Court. Some schemes there had been about the Norfolk marriage, to which Moray and Lethington were parties, but it does not appear that the Duke suppressed evidence against Mary, but rather that Lethington persuaded him that the infamous letters were forgeries. As for Moray's part, he probably concealed what he knew not for fear, but because he was hoping for some private advantage from the scheme—Mary's marriage to an Englishman, her residence in England as a private person might have suited him quite well.

Whatever the truth "dashed and brewed with lies" at the bottom of this tangle and chicanery, it is obvious that the Commission at York was a farce. If Mary was not treated fairly, neither did she behave fairly. How could Norfolk be at once her chief adviser, her promised husband, and her judge? It was hopeless, too, for the cause of justice to allow Mary's Commissioners and Moray and Lethington to meet secretly. We are left with the impression that Elizabeth did endeavour to behave justly and to get at the bottom of the whole miserable business, but that she was defeated by the weakness of Norfolk, the shifting evasiveness of Mary, the exasperating double-dealing of Maitland of Lethington, the opportunism of Moray, and the fact that Mary's Commissioners had either not got up their case properly or did not dare put it forward.

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In January 1569, Mary had been removed, despite her protestations, to Tutbury, near Burton-on-Trent, a castle belonging to the Earl of Shrewsbury. She was ill and had to travel in a litter. Sir Francis Knollys, who had been her guardian and warder since his arrival at Carlisle, was still in charge of her. It is evident from his letters that he felt some compassion and even affection towards his young prisoner; he tried to soften Elizabeth's heart.

Writing of Mary, movingly enough, he says: "She has courage enough to hold out as long as any ray of hope may be left, and to be plain, it seems that this Queen is half-persuaded

that God has given you such a reasonable affection that you will not openly disgrace her nor forcibly maintain Lord Moray against her, notwithstanding she refused to yield to Your Majesty's orders."

Mary was not rigorously secluded; she received messages from her uncle, the Cardinal of Guise, and her Scotch friends came and went as they chose. Elizabeth, difficult always on the question of money, did not allow much for her expenses, but there seems no evidence that she ever lacked anything. She had, during the whole of her residence in England, her French dowry to dispose of, and though she only got this with difficulty—it was usually in arrears—she did receive from time to time at least a portion of it. At times, however, the non-arrival of the French money and Elizabeth's economy put Mary and whoever might be in charge of her in a humiliating position. From Bolton, Knollys had written to Cecil that "neither money nor credit" was left them.

At Tutbury, Mary received the Bishop of Ross and Lord Herries on their return from their futile mission to Elizabeth, and turned over with them their desperate schemes for the future.

Mary's household then consisted of thirty persons for which Shrewsbury was allowed forty-five pounds a week. Any expenses over these were to be met by the Earl out of his own pocket.

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It was at Tutbury that Mary was visited by Sir Nicholas White, a man in Cecil's employ who has left a famous and charming picture of the young captive. "The Queen of Scots has an alluring grace, a pretty Scotch speech and a perfect wit clouded with mildness." He added a warning that it would be dangerous to allow anyone to see Mary, such joy did she give by her charms and so easy would it be for anyone to be seduced by her; evidently Sir Nicholas thought that she was an enchantress difficult to resist. Here is the same opinion, more courteously expressed, as John Knox's statement about her "craft", and as that of the Lords when they feared that she would bring the King under her spell and mistrusted her French-bred ways. But where had all these graces and charms, accounted so powerful and perilous by sober men, led Mary? To the very nadir of misfortune.

Sir Nicholas adds that the Queen had ten women and fifty

persons in her household and remarks, evidently with astonishment, that she sat up till one o'clock at night, no doubt consumed with reckless discontent and unable to sleep. She told Sir Nicholas the long empty days were filled with needlework—she found this exact and absorbing labour a relief to her nervous agitation. She said that the diversity of the colours made the work seem less tedious; tradition says that while at Lochleven she had worked a gorgeous tapestry. As she always had a professional embroiderer with her we do not know how much of the work was her own.

Beyond this we know little of the details of her lonely life, but her thoughts may well be guessed. In the April of that year she was moved to Wingfield, still under the guardianship of Shrewsbury. Here she was ill again, prostrate with anguish and melancholy and there were more sordid and painful money difficulties. Norfolk, with whom she was in constant communication and who must at this time have represented her one hope, advanced her a large sum, nearly, it is said, one thousand six hundred pounds, while the Bishop of Ross obtained a loan from an agent of the Pope, a certain Italian merchant named Rudolfi, from which means Norfolk was repaid.

There can be no doubt that Elizabeth would have been glad to be rid of Mary if some compromise in her affairs could have been made with safety to England. But Cecil could not advise her how to do this; he wrote in a note he made about Mary "that her friends desire to place her upon the Scotch and upon the English throne. It cannot be thought that she would be more scrupulous to take away Queen Elizabeth's life, than she was to destroy her husband, because his life hindered her adulterous marriage with Bothwell. Catholics provided with Papal absolution would never be scrupulous."

As it can hardly be supposed Cecil was feigning when he wrote this private paper, we may take it that he was convinced of Mary's guilt.

Elizabeth's Privy Council seemed to have shared this view when they advised their Sovereign not to have a hand in the restoration of Mary on the following grounds: That it was a crime to set such an infamous person on a throne, that she would prove an active, dangerous enemy to England, that she would be a peril to the Protestants, that she would either recall Bothwell, who would cancel all her promises because they were given without his consent, or make another marriage equally

dangerous to England. Further strong expressions evincing belief in the worst charges against Mary were added.

Mr. Randolph, writing from the heart of Scotland's disordered and intricate affairs, wrote: "If Elizabeth lets Mary go free, the party of the King and the Protestants will be oppressed."

This being the juncture of affairs, it is absurd to accuse Elizabeth, as so many writers do, of petty spite and jealous malice towards Mary and an eager desire to prove her guilt and dishonour her openly. Mary's only claims were those of sentiment—her birth, youth, charm, misfortune, and Elizabeth, for England's sake, was pledged not to listen to sentiment.

Sir William Cecil gave the Queen private reasoned advice as to the Norfolk marriage, "which could not in itself be termed a crime, yet might prove very dangerous to Elizabeth". He advised her to temporize; Norfolk had done nothing savouring of treason, and though he would be safer married elsewhere and Mary safer tied to Bothwell, yet there was nothing for it but to watch and wait.

The Duke of Norfolk was in a curious position, in putting his fortunes at Mary's disposal he had much indeed to lose and all that he might hope to gain was vague and uncertain.

He was the premier noble of England, a Prince of ancient family, wealthy, with handsome estates, honourable posts, much influence and possessed all that could make life easy, delightful and interesting. He had his name, his family and his son to consider. His early marriage with an heiress of sixteen, Lady Mary Fitzalan, daughter of the Earl of Arundel, had left him with this son who would add to his Howard estates a superb heritage; the Duke was putting the future of this boy in jeopardy by any plots or schemes to help Mary. The Duke had also five children by his second marriage to Margaret, the daughter of Thomas Audley of Audley, and had lost his third wife, Elizabeth the daughter of Sir Francis Leybourne and the widow of Thomas, Lord Dacre, the year of Mary's flight into England. He had had then, like the woman whom he now wooed, a triple experience of matrimony, and seemed as ready to forget his former wives as she was willing to forget her former husbands. There was also the religious question. Norfolk was a Protestant and pledged to help the Reformed Faith. For all this, this wealthy, highly placed young man

was tempted, by ambition or goaded by a "fantasy of love" such as George Douglas had felt for the captive Queen, or merely by a rash desire to be meddling in high affairs, into pledging himself to Earl Bothwell's wife.

At Wingfield Manor, Mary had been drawing up schemes to be free of her captive lord for whom she never evinced the least pity and of whom she hoped to be rid, without disclosing why she had ever married him. The Regent's young uterine brother, George Douglas of Lochleven, was in her service then and seems to have serv'd as a messenger between her and Norfolk. Despite the earlier scandals and the suggestions of marriage with this gentleman, we hear nothing more of his relations with Mary, though they must have met quite freely. What had been the outcome of that "fantasy of love"? If it was rewarded or quenched or had ended in platonic devotion, we do not know, but his affectionate service must have been of great solace to Mary. Willie Douglas, the page who had been so clever with the keys at Lochleven, was also in her retinue.

While Mary was thus fretting herself into sickness at the long delays in any settlement of her case, Norfolk was slowly moving in an effort to release and marry the captive Queen. He had with him a fair number of the English nobility. Mary agreed easily to this marriage, which promised little better than those she had already experienced. If Norfolk had a romantic infatuation for her she could scarcely have indulged any such feeling for him for she had hardly seen him. She did not hesitate for this, however, nor reflect that he was not a man of much decision and character, nor of any great ability nor one in the least likely to able to restore her ruined fortunes.

It was natural, perhaps, for her to snatch at any chance. She pledged herself to the Duke, sent him a beautiful jewel with her own likeness in a cameo in the centre, and accepted from him a rich diamond that she wore in her bosom. Her letters to him display her undisputed attitude to Henry Stewart and her disputed attitude to Bothwell, submission, devotion, and humility, couched in what reads like the language of passion.

Since she had been in England she had been in communication with Bothwell's friend and kinsman, Hepburn of Riccartoun, and she must have had some news of her husband. Did she ever think of him in Norway, in a captivity far more dreary and hopeless than her own? Did she ever consider those vows of loyalty that she is supposed to have made on the field of

Carberry Hill or dwell on any memories of that violent passion for the sake of which she had forfeited all a woman can forfeit? We do not know, but at least, she was ready to marry Norfolk, to wear his jewels, to send him her portrait, to write him love letters, to obey him as to her course of action.

Robert, Lord Boyd, was employed by the Queen as an intermediary between herself and her lover. On the occasion of her furtive betrothal she wrote to the Duke: "I took from my lord Boyd the diamond, which I shall keep unseen about my neck until I give it again to the owner of it and me both."

Elizabeth, inviting Norfolk, for whom she had some liking, to dinner, gave him a hint of his danger. She asked him if it was his intention to marry the Queen of Scots. The Duke said "No," and that all rumours to this effect had been put about by his enemies for his ruin. Elizabeth affected to believe this, but bade him "beware of his pillow" lest it might prove to be of wood.

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By July 1569, Mary had sent Lord Boyd, with Elizabeth's permission, to Scotland, with her commission for prosecuting a divorce from Bothwell. To this end had come that strange marriage.

In colourless, official words Mary demanded release from the man whom she had vowed she would "follow to the world's end in a white petticoat". She claimed that the marriage was unlawful, that Lord Bothwell was already contracted to another wife and he not lawfully divorced from her, but also "although we were informed there was no impediment, that there were divers great impediments of affinity and otherwise standing between us, and that if they had been known to us would have made an impediment to our proceedings, and which now being revealed to us is sufficient to make us clearly understand that we may be separated from him by the Law".

This protestation on Mary's behalf was totally insincere. She knew perfectly well when she married Bothwell how matters stood between him and her, and it was the very Archbishop of St. Andrews to whom she now appealed to dissolve her marriage, who had put through Jane Gordon's divorce.

We do not know under whose advice Mary prepared this document, but it seems strange that she should have missed

this opportunity of protesting officially that she had been abducted and forced into the marriage by Bothwell, instead of basing her claim for release from him on legal quibbles. She does not mention either Bothwell's supposed complicity in Darnley's murder nor his own abduction and ravishment of her person.

This document was produced before the Scottish Privy Council at Perth, which was presided over by the Regent, who was probably acting under secret advices from Elizabeth. The Lords who had taken up arms against Mary in order to rescue her from Bothwell refused to dissolve her marriage because it did not conveniently fit into the then political combination that Mary should marry again. Norfolk or any other man who would or might become the Queen's fourth husband would be a potential danger to Moray. The motion for giving the Queen her divorce was defeated by forty votes against nine.

Maitland of Lethington, whose conduct, as usual, was inexplicable, spoke for the Queen for whom he had been working since his return from England. He told Moray that it was strange that those who had so lately taken up arms expressly for the purpose of separating the Queen from Bothwell should now have so entirely changed their minds. Maitland of Lethington must have known perfectly well the reason for this same change of mind; he had evidently decided to espouse the Queen's cause, but too late to be of any service to her. If he had shown this spirit at Westminster and denounced the letters to be a forgery he might possibly have altered the course of her affairs.

There are several accounts of this important meeting of the Scotch Privy Council. According to one, Lord Boyd had brought proposals from Mary for a compromise with Moray as well as the demand for a divorce. He was to be pardoned, she was to be liberated (if not restored she was at least to be delivered from prison and allowed to retire into private life as Norfolk's wife). If either of these expedients was proposed by Mary in her desperation, as they well may have been, they were refused.

Moray was not a man to tolerate an enemy among his familiars. He revenged promptly the defection of Maitland, and together with Kirkcaldy of Grange, who had now joined the Queen's party, and Lord Seton, another of Mary's followers, Sir William was arrested and lodged in Edinburgh Castle.

The charge against them was that they were "art and part" in the murder of Darnley. It seems as if there were never to be an end of this crime. Seldom, surely, has a murdered man been so largely revenged.

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That year, Nicolas Hubert or "Paris" or "French Paris", Bothwell's valet, who had been extradited from Norway, where he had fled with his master, was executed at St. Andrews (August, 1569). This was the man who is supposed to have carried the famous letters from Mary in Glasgow to Bothwell in Edinburgh. This unhappy wretch did all he could to save his life by endeavouring to please Moray by a confession which implicated Bothwell and Mary and no one else. These rambling and contradictory and not properly witnessed depositions are of no value in throwing any light on the death of the King or Mary's guilt or innocence. Much of what the Frenchman said, in fear of his life, of the torture, in the hope of pleasing Moray, is incoherent. His account of how Bothwell arranged the murder plot with him is disgusting and incredible; he exonerated and flattered the Regent.

"Where the garbage gathers, the greedy pike you'll see,
And where there's such a master, such a servant there will be."

The miserable Paris was a fitting lacquey to Earl Bothwell, whom he accused of revolting vices. Whether he or those who garbled his account are responsible for it, whether it be some truth or all invention, this relation of the Kirk o' Field murder is far removed from any poetry or romance. Savage cruelty, brutal lust, callous stupidity, show here as vividly as in Ruthven's version of the Rizzio butchery. Here, as there, disease adds a loathsome touch to a story already sordid; when Rizzio was slain the Queen was pregnant and sick, Ruthven dying of an internal complaint. At Kirk o' Field not only was the wittol husband devoured by a loathsome skin complaint and a general foulness of body, the murderous wife ailing from pain and weakness, but the adulterous lover was suffering from dysentery, and it was during an attack of this complaint, in a closet "between two doors" that he planned with the disolute lacquey the placing of the gunpowder in Mary's room. And this in the house where the King lay abed. The hurried lies or bitter truths of Paris did not save him; on the day of his execution the stern Moray, on slight grounds, burnt the

Lyon King-at-Arms, Sir William Stewart, as a wizard. We do not know if the hacked limbs of Paris were taken round in baskets to all the market towns of Scotland, as had been those of the other Kirk o' Field conspirators who had been executed.

Mary could not have been indifferent to this news—did she recall the man, his taking of her love letters, his face soiled by powder—“ Jesu, Paris, how begrimed you are! ”?

It is said that on the scaffold Paris revoked these confessions and declared that he had never carried letters from the Queen to Bothwell; the whole of his affair is obscure.

Moray, evidently, did not regard him as a reliable witness against the Queen, or else feared that he would implicate others besides Mary. Elizabeth wanted this valuable prisoner sent to England, but the Regent preferred to place him beyond any possible indiscretion.

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Her failure to obtain her divorce was not the only obstacle in the way of Mary's marriage to Norfolk. Elizabeth heard of or suspected the betrothal and the Duke was sent to the Tower, only being released in August 1570, on the promise that he would have nothing more to do with the Queen of Scots, an undertaking that he readily gave and readily broke: ambition, passion or pity for the captive inspiring him to intrigue immediately on her behalf again.

Maitland of Lethington, imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, contrived to send letters to Mary encouraging her with elaborate schemes for the future, but, despite these grains of hope, when the project of obtaining her divorce and the marriage with Norfolk fell through, Mary must have been in almost as complete a despair as was possible to one of her ardent spirit. She was again ill, probably from mental misery as well as from her old internal complaint. All her projects and her desires were narrowed to a desperate wish for freedom; she did not consider, naturally enough, that if she did succeed in getting to France, Catherine de' Medici would probably treat her no better than did Elizabeth of England. Nor that, if she did succeed in returning to Scotland, she might very probably be put to death by private assassination or public trial, or, at least, enclosed in a more rigorous imprisonment than that she suffered in England.

It was natural that, enclosed away from the world, she should begin to lose all sense of everything save the desire to

regain her liberty. Her unanswered letters to Elizabeth make piteous reading: so do her dignified yet humble supplications to Sir William Cecil. "Notwithstanding that we have several times written to the Queen lamenting our piteous state and uncourteous dealing as well towards our own person and the company we have, abiding her good resolution in our cause and indulging in hope at her hands this long time past and as it has obtained no answer we have no way of requiring to save as otherwise we would have done since we came here as a prisoner in very strict guard. We have written to her other letters to the same effect, praying you to give your good advice and counsel to the Queen, that she have pity on our estate."

In November 1569, two powerful northern Earls, Northumberland and Westmoreland, both of whom had been present at the Westminster Conference, rode in arms on behalf of Queen Mary. Their objective was her release and marriage with Norfolk. Such a revolt was exactly what Mary must have hoped for and Elizabeth feared, when the Queen of Scots crossed the Solway. It might have ended in a revolution which would have put Mary on the throne and Elizabeth in the Tower; but the English government was too alert for the rebellion to have a chance of success.

Warwick and Sussex with a large force were sent to the rebellious North. Mary was removed to Coventry, before the rebel Lords having entered Durham,¹ could take Tutbury. Hartlepool and Barnard's Castle surrendered to the rebels, but Elizabeth's troops defeated them at Hexham; the two Earls escaped into Scotland—Northumberland to hide himself with Armstrong, a Border chieftain near Hawick, and Westmoreland to take refuge with Carr of Fernihurst, near Jedburgh.

There had been some promise of men and money from the King of Spain to help this rising, but it had not materialized, and the little rebellion only brought a more complete disaster on Mary and her followers.

Armstrong sold Northumberland, who had behaved with energy and a certain heroism, to Moray, who sent him to Lochleven; Westmoreland remained in hiding with the Carrs, who would not betray him, and heavy executions in the North

¹ The two Earls left no doubt as to their intentions. With a train of 1,700 horse and 4,000 foot they heard Mass at Durham and publicly burnt the Book of Common Prayer and the English Bible.

warned the Roman Catholics not to espouse rashly the cause of the Queen of Scots; many suspected of favouring the rising had their entire estates confiscated.

Elizabeth appears soon after this, to have endeavoured to get rid of her troublesome and dangerous captive by delivering her to Moray, but the negotiations fell through. Moray's intention probably was to put Mary to trial and death; in face of his charges at Westminster he could scarcely have failed to do so. Elizabeth would know this and wash her hands of the whole affair.

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Towards the end of January 1570, the Regent was riding from Stirling to Edinburgh. In passing through Linlithgow he and his retinue had to proceed slowly by reason of the crowd and the narrowness of the street. A vague warning was given him in the press that there was danger awaiting him, but Moray was well-used to peril and, no doubt, well-used to warnings; he passed on; as he made his slow progress through the crowd he was shot from a window of one of the houses. A black cloth was hung in front of this and a hole had been cut in it through which the murderer, standing on a feather bed that he might not be heard, took careful aim at the defenceless man so close beneath him in the crowded street.

James Stewart, Earl of Moray, Regent of Scotland, thus received mortal injuries; he was dragged into one of the houses to die slowly, to bleed to death from a wound in the stomach. He was thirty-nine years of age, strong and healthy. The murderer was one David Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, who had some obscure grievance against one of Moray's underlings.

Many fables have been told to account for his deed, but though he escaped to France and after ten or eleven years returned to Scotland, where he lived to be an old man, no one ever knew the reason for his assassination of Moray. Mathew Stewart, Earl of Lennox, the grandfather of the young Prince, was chosen Regent of Scotland by the influence of Elizabeth.

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Mary rejoiced at the death of her brother, who had saved her from the most ferocious and degrading of fates in 1567, and conferred a pension out of her French revenues on his murderer, Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh, although in the letter to Archbishop Beaton, Steward of her French estate, she is

careful to state that the murder was "sans mon commandement".

Against this undoubted fact may be put Brantôme's statement that she was "*la douceur mesme*", that she took no pleasure, when in France, in seeing criminals punished "*comme beaucoup de grandes que j'ai commes*", and was much affected by the misery of the galley slaves who brought her to Scotland.

It is possible, however, to find in the same character, a cruel vindictiveness towards an enemy, and a soft compassion towards sufferers who have not offended. There is no doubt that Mary did regard Moray as her enemy and the author of her downfall. When she learned (March, 1570) that Moray's wife, Agnes Keith, was in possession, among other State jewels, of "*Henri le Grand*", a superb diamond given to Mary by Henri II and by her left to the Scottish Crown in memory of herself and the House of Valois, she wrote, justifiably indignant, to Lady Moray on the subject.

In this epistle she reveals both malice towards the dead man and prudence on the subject of his death. "Albeit your late husband had so unnaturally and unthankfully offended us . . . we desired not his blood shed."

Mary's request for her jewels was, of course, refused; the hoard was destined to become almost as potent a source of dispute as the Rhinegold.

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The same month that her brother was assassinated at Linlithgow, Mary wrote one of her insinuating love letters to the luckless Norfolk.

"MINE OWN LORD,

I wrote you before to know your pleasure if I should seek to make any enterprise. If it had pleased you I care not for my danger, but wish you would seek to do the like for if you and I could escape both we should find friends enough. And for your lands I hope they should not be lost, for being free and honourably bound together you might make such good offers for the countries and the Queen of England that they should not refuse.

"Our faults were not shameful, you had promised to be mine and I yours, and I believe the Queen of England and country should like of it. By means of friends, therefore, you have sought your liberty and satisfaction of your conscience, meaning that you promised me you could not leave me.

"If you think the danger great, do as you think best and let me know what you please that I do, for I will ever be for your sake

perpetual prisoner, or put my life in peril for your weal and mine. As you please, command me, for I will for all the world follow your commands so that you be not in danger from me in so doing. I will, either if I were not by humble submission, and all my friends were against it, or by other ways, work for our liberties as long as I live.

"Let me know your mind and whether you are not offended in me, for I fear you are, being as I do hear no news from you.

"I pray God preserve you and keep us both from deceitful friends.

Your own faithful to death,
MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS, my Norfolk."

It would seem that Mary was still cherishing the hope of marrying her champion, though how she intended to procure the divorce which the Scotch Privy Council had refused, is not apparent.

Mary's position was not improved by the Bull of Pope Pius V,¹ which excommunicated Elizabeth. The Queen of England, inflamed by this affront, regarded all Roman Catholics in England with a severer eye. She refused to listen to various tentative schemes from Scotland put forward by Maitland (who had regained his liberty), Herries, Hamilton, Atholl, and other of Mary's friends for the restoration or release of the Queen.

Mary was removed to Chatsworth in May, 1570, where she was visited by Cecil, who brought up once more the ancient Treaty of Edinburgh. There was much talk of this and that, Westmoreland was to be delivered up, the young Prince was to be given into Elizabeth's charge—to the first Mary would not agree, to the second she would, but all ended in nothing. At last she said she would ratify the treaty.

In July 1570, Rudolf, the Papal agent, was in Madrid, putting a scheme to restore Mary before Philip II. There were suggestions that she might marry a Spanish prince.

Charles IX made a formal, probably insincere effort on Mary's behalf; his Ambassador demanded Mary's release from Elizabeth. This was refused, but the Frenchman was allowed to visit the captive Queen at Chatsworth. Elizabeth was trying to placate France.

¹ This marks the climax and supreme effort of the counter-Reformation; it was done without the knowledge of Philip II, and made the conflict in Scotland part of an international war of religion.

Scotland, with the removal of the strong personality of Moray, was in a tumult. King's men and Queen's men, that is, the adherents of Mary and those of her infant son, marched up and down the land; the new Regent, Lennox, had no great authority and thought more of his private feuds than of his country. Herries, still loyal to Mary, had "a weary heart"; Seton, another staunch friend, had gone to Flanders to collect help for the Queen from Alva's Spanish forces. Morton was writing earnestly to England that the release of Mary would be the ruin of Elizabeth and her realm and the Scotch party in Scotland.

Lennox, who stood well with Elizabeth, entered into some negotiations with her to exchange Mary for Northumberland, but this fell through. The Countess of Northumberland was also vainly bidding for the life of her unfortunate lord; thus the noble family of the Percies was ruined through being involved in Mary's restless intrigues.

Lennox as Regent was meanwhile breathing fury against his enemies and revenging himself for the humiliation of the days after Kirk o' Field; Henry Stewart's ghost received more sacrifices.

In the autumn of 1570, Lennox seized Dumbarton Castle, which contained a small number of Mary's partisans. Among these was the Archbishop of Saint Andrew. This John Hamilton, a natural son of the first Earl of Arran, had played an equivocal part in Mary's affairs; he had been in the Hamilton mansion at Kirk o' Field on the night of the murder and was supposed to have countenanced it; he had, in virtue of the exceptional powers granted to him by Mary, put through the Bothwell divorce. He was said to have been in favour of putting her to death after Carberry Hill, and he had helped in her escape from Lochleven. Lennox now gave this adroit opportunist the punishment of political failure by having him hanged and quartered at Stirling, under charges of being "art and part" in the murder of the King and that of Moray.

Lennox took charge of the young King and put him in the charge of that careless historian and able scholar, George Buchanan, who had done so much to blast utterly his pupil's mother.

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Mary received notice of various schemes, more or less impractical, for her escape. She grounded all her hopes on

Norfolk, and put all these proposals before him. He, hesitant and bewildered by the twisting of events, would not consent to any definite action. It is notable that, though Mary had complained of the strictness of her prison, she was able to carry on and to conduct these delicate negotiations.

Norfolk had Elizabeth's keen eye on him and must have been aware of it. He had entered into a bond to meddle no more in Mary's affairs, and though released from the Tower was practically a prisoner in his own house. Despite this, he indulged in hopes that Elizabeth would relent and consent to his union with Mary, and for this reason discouraged all plans on the part of the Queen's adherents for an attempt at her escape. He did not wish to risk anything, nor could he altogether forego meddling, in a reluctant fashion, in Mary's destiny. Truly this princess was unfortunate in the men on whom she bestowed her affections.

If Norfolk had possessed a quarter of the daring and enterprise of Bothwell he might have rescued Mary from Chatsworth as that nobleman had rescued her from Holyrood. Surely, despite her submissive letters, she must have bitterly contrasted this timid English lover with her unhappy husband languishing in a Norwegian prison; we know that courage was the virtue that of all others she admired.

Maitland still stood for the Queen and was sending her letters giving her accounts of the state of affairs in Scotland. He had recently fallen into a miserable habit of body—a slow paralysis was enfeebling the adroit statesman, the clever courtier, the accomplished noble. It seems as if everyone who had a part in the drama of Mary was under a curse; a sinister fate overtook one by one all who had to do with her and her lovers.

From month to month these futile intrigues dragged on, tormenting Mary with the anguish of "hope deferred". Elizabeth became no softer towards her captive but more difficult to move. She refused to listen to a deputation from the Hamiltons, Argyll and Huntly, demanding the release of Mary, and to another ambassador, Fénelon, from the King of France. Mary turned everywhere in her desperate attempts to gain help; she sent a passionate supplication to Pius V imploring him in the name of their common Faith to intervene on her behalf. But the Pope, although he may have had some sentimental sympathy for Mary, could not find her of such political importance to warrant his interference in her affairs.

It seems that Mary saw Norfolk again in the autumn of 1570. There were further schemes for her rescue, all of which he negatived under fear for his personal safety. Mary, however, relied on his intelligence and judgment, either because she trusted these or because it gave her pleasure to submit herself to a master, or because she saw nothing else to do; the slow, half-hearted love affair came to a disastrous conclusion.

Mary received a large sum of money from France and it was her intention to send this by George Douglas to Edinburgh to help her friends therewith. The loyal messenger, however, did not know how to get into Scotland as he had no passport and he asked Norfolk's advice. Many of Mary's messengers had been arrested, including Baillie, secretary to the Bishop of Ross, who on the rack had made confessions that had sent his master to the Tower. The Duke thought he could trust the money to a servant of his own, one Banister, who would deliver it to Lord Herries, and therefore sent the package by a carrier named Brown to this steward of his, Banister, at Shrewsbury.

Brown, however, took the money and the covering letter to Cecil, recently created Lord Burleigh (1570); it is possible that he was a government spy who had artfully contrived to gain the confidence of the Duke.

Norfolk was, therefore, again confined to the Tower and Mary was much more strictly guarded. All the Duke's meddlings with Mary's affairs were betrayed by a servant, who was put to the torture, and in consequence the Queen's retinue was then reduced to sixteen, to her extreme distress. She wrote her dismissed servants a noble and pathetic farewell, and she struggled hard, with great generosity, to prevent Willie Douglas and John Gordon who had helped her to escape from Lochleven, from being sent back to Scotland—a journey that would probably mean death to them.

She mentions them by name in this farewell: "And you, William Douglas, be assured that the life you hazarded for mine will never be neglected while I have a friend living." And she begged them if they could manage to do so to go to the Court of France all together, keeping one another company: "And go to my Ambassador there and declare to him all you have seen and heard of me and mine."

It is quite possible to sympathize with the wretchedness of

Mary's position and at the same time to understand Elizabeth's point of view. She could hardly be expected to allow Mary full permission to inspire and encourage plots and to arrange rebellions in England. Nor could she, politically speaking, allow her to return to Scotland where she, Elizabeth, had accepted the Sovereignty of the youthful Protestant, James VI, nor would it be advisable for her to allow Mary to go to France or Spain or even to Rome to rouse by her clamour, her beauty, her wrongs, her eloquence, dangerous political combinations and perhaps armed forces against England.

Elizabeth had, by then, yet another reason for her prolonged detention of Mary that was bitterly hinted at by Maitland. "The Queen of England," he said, "would never dare release a woman whom she had so bitterly wronged." Elizabeth had heard from Knollys that Mary was "vindictive".

Mary's letters were intercepted, she was not allowed, despite her piteous entreaties, to write to her son, her spirits sank under her continued misfortunes and she became extremely ill, no doubt from the advances of a definite disease as well as from distress and anguish.

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In the autumn of 1571, Lord Lennox was assassinated at Stirling, during a scuffle between his men and Kirkcaldy of Grange, with whom was the tumultuous Huntly, Lord Claud Hamilton and Scott of Buccleugh.

They surprised Stirling where the Regent was in residence and captured him in bed together with Morton, Argyll, Glencairn, Eglinton, Cassilis, Sempill, Cathcart, and Ochiltree. These notable prisoners were mounted on horseback in preparation for the journey to Edinburgh. The cavalcade, however, had not started before Mar came to the rescue with a body of armed men, and, with the help of the citizens, drove off Kirkcaldy's soldiers, who were then pillaging the town.

In the tumult Lennox and Morton contrived to escape but one of Kirkcaldy's officers, Captain Calder, ran up and shot the Regent through the back. The assassin afterwards said that he had murdered Lennox at the instigation of Huntly in reprisal for the death of John Hamilton, Archbishop of St. Andrews, who had been brutally executed by Lennox shortly before; numerous other Hamiltons had fallen victims to the vengeance of King Henry's father and this was the vengeance.

Lennox was dragged back into Stirling Castle, where he died

that night, and John Erskine, Earl of Mar, was elected Regent. Morton had been Elizabeth's candidate but he had no qualifications whatever for such a responsibility save that courage which was required for one who wished to occupy an office, not, as Maitland remarked dryly, "of long duration".

"The Earl of Morton held his house longest before he yielded, smoked out of it by fire," writes Lethington, in the account he gave the captive Queen of this affair.

No doubt this bloody affray afforded her some satisfaction. There was another of her enemies gone, that father-in-law who had been so fiercely her enemy from the moment of his son's murder, who had done his best to blast her reputation and ruin her life and even to bring her to the stake.

Maitland of Lethington, despite the miserable state of his health, was then holding Edinburgh Castle for the Queen. Circumstances had changed the adroit, subtle, and fastidious politician into a man of action. He could not have had, with his shrewd intelligence, much hope for the outcome of the struggle. He was desperately poor, having no money wherewith to pay his soldiers, save small sums that Mary was able to forward him from what she could get of her French dowry.

Mar, the Regent, was not in a much better case, but he did receive a certain financial assistance from Elizabeth, who still believed that, putting aside all the old vexed questions of the King's murder and the Bothwell marriage, she had definite grievances against Mary and was definitely pledged to support James VI.

John Lesley, Bishop of Ross, seized by Elizabeth and imprisoned in the Tower after the arrest of Baillie, had, under some dismal pressure, turned traitor, and evidence was extorted from him against Norfolk and Queen Mary; some of this was forged or is hysterical for he made the wildest accusations against his mistress. Elizabeth was reluctant to proceed to extremes with Norfolk, the premier peer of the realm, but he had been warned, he had been pardoned once, he had offended again and the evidence against him, which included his correspondence with the Pope and Philip II, was overwhelming. Twice Elizabeth revoked her signature to his death warrant, but the third time she let it go, and Norfolk was beheaded; he had with him in the Tower a "little picture in gold of the Scots Queen", but he accepted his sentence calmly and declared it just. In his letters to the Pope he had declared his willingness to become a Roman

Catholic, but at the end swore that he had always been a true Protestant.

He would have condemned anyone, he declared, on the evidence that had been brought against him, false as the accusations had been he had "put his head under their girdles" and blamed no one for the judgment against him. He was the first noble whom Elizabeth put to death for high treason.

He forfeited not only his life but his splendid title and noble estates, leaving to his descendants for three generations (the attaintor was reversed in 1664 in favour of Thomas, Earl of Arundel), only the lands and titles that had come from his girl wife of a year, Mary Fitzalan. Neither his character nor his intentions is clear; he was personally popular and left many friends to mourn him.

Thus ended Mary's last vague, furtive, and hesitant love affair.

She showed an open and almost uncontrollable grief at Norfolk's death, whether for the man or the chance he represented one cannot guess. Insensitive and unimaginative as she was, she must have recollected with a pang the wretched fortunes of every man whom she had ever attached to her fortunes, from the sickly French prince, dying in early youth, half imbecile, to Gordon and Chastelard on the scaffold, Henry Stewart murdered, Bothwell's death in life, and Norfolk kneeling at the block.

"Oh, farewell you well, young man, she says,
Farewell and I bid adieu,
Since you've provided a weed for me
Amid the summer flowers,
I will provide another for you
Amid the winter showers.
The new fall'n snow to be your smock,
It becomes your body best;
Your head shall be wrap'd with the Eastern wind
And the cold rain on your breast."

Mary had to endure another misfortune; Lord Seton, returning from the Low Countries with some help in arms and money from Alva, was wrecked on the Scotch coast and the much needed supplies lost. Some of Seton's correspondence was intercepted and helped to increase Elizabeth's anger.

The English Parliament wished to attain Mary as fellow-

conspirator with Norfolk against the English throne, but Elizabeth refused her consent. She, however, on Mary's complaints of her treatment, sent three commissioners to Sheffield to accuse formally Mary of fomenting plots, inspiring the Pope's Bull of excommunication against Elizabeth, and secretly betrothing herself to Norfolk.

All these letters, interviews, protests, accusations, merely darkened the air with bitterness; the two Queens became, with every week of Mary's detention, more determined enemies. Popular feeling against Mary ran high in England. The House of Lords and the Clergy presented to the Queen, May, 1572, a petition in which in the sternest language they detailed Mary's crimes, while a pamphlet issued in 1572 concluded : "There is no remedy for the Queen (Elizabeth) for our realm of Christendom, but the due execution of the Scottish Queen."

This remonstrance also points out an obvious weakness in Mary's behaviour, i.e. her betrothal to Norfolk while Bothwell still lived. "Mary is now free from known contracts, for herself counteth Bothwell but as her fornicator, for else she could not have contracted with the Duke of Norfolk."

This false, dangerous woman might contrive, therefore, another marriage "with some mighty one Monsieur (François de Valois, Duc d'Alençon) or Don John of Austria".

In violent language, highly coloured, but not unfitting to be employed on this drama, the unknown author, who may be taken as the mouthpiece of popular opinion, laments "so much noble and innocent blood as has and shall be spilt, so many murders, rapes, robberies, violent and barbarous slaughter of all sorts, sexes and ages . . . the damnation of so many seduced souls . . . and all for piteous pity and miserable mercy in sparing one horrible woman who carries God's wrath wherever she goeth".

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When any of this public excitement, inflamed to fury by that Papist atrocity, the massacre of Saint Bartholomew, 1572, found its way to Mary she held her ground with spirit. She declared she was entitled to take what steps she could to procure her release. She had pledged her faith to the Duke of Norfolk and as for the Pope's Bull she had burnt the copy she had received. The treaty of Blois, between France and England, was another blow for the prisoner.

The next year Elizabeth was exasperated and Mary further

disappointed by the abortive Rudolfi plot whereby the Pope and the King of Spain were to provide arms and money together with trained troops for a descent in Scotland and the North of England. Earl Huntly was to take command of this force, release Mary, restore her to the throne of Scotland, and, if possible, place her on that of England. Did Bothwell's wild brother-in-law hope to take his place as Mary's lord?

Such discoveries confirmed Elizabeth and Burleigh in their fear and suspicion of Mary and proved to them how real a peril was their illustrious captive. The feeling against Mary ran high; probably only the will of Elizabeth saved her from death. There was strong Huguenot sympathy in England, encouraged by the presence, at Sheen Palace, of the representative of the French Protestants, the former Cardinal Odet, brother of Gaspard de Coligny, whose murder a few days before Saint Bartholomew was regarded with as much horror as was the massacre itself; an odious crime inspired, it was believed, by a Queen, Catherine, and thus reflecting obliquely upon Mary another feminine Roman Catholic ruler.

In this year 1572, Northumberland was executed at York; Elizabeth had bought him, after he had been two years at Lochleven, from Mar and Morton for two thousand pounds, although his wife had offered an equal ransom. This nobleman had little concern in Mary's story, but his interference with her fortunes cost him his life. His fellow rebel, Westmoreland, escaped to the Continent, where he lived in poverty in Brussels until his death in 1601.

The Regent, Mar, died suddenly after dining with Morton in Dalkeith Palace. There were, of course, suspicions that he had been poisoned by Morton, who was installed Regent on the day that Mary's ferocious opponent, John Knox, died, the 24th of November, 1572. The Pacification of Perth (1573) ended the civil war.

The energetic Douglas immediately turned his attention to Edinburgh Castle in which, under the leadership of Maitland, Kirkcaldy of Grange had been holding out, more or less hopelessly, for Mary. The garrison, "the Castalians" as they were termed, after undergoing great straits, surrendered on the 29th of May, 1573. The Laird of Grange and his brother, Sir James Kirkcaldy, were publicly executed at the Cross of Edinburgh, and Maitland was flung into prison at Leith, where he died wretchedly in his dungeon either from a stroke or apoplexy or,

as was constantly believed at the time, poison. Despite the piteous appeals of his wife, Mary Fleming, his body was treated with great indignity, a horrible offence that moved Elizabeth to scorn.

In defiance of her protests to Morton, Maitland was not buried until he had been brought to court in his coffin to receive sentence according to the barbarous procedure that had been employed in the case of the last Earl of Huntly.

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Mary must have heard of these violent events as if they were echoes from far-off worlds. Her existence had narrowed down to her needlework, her books, her talk with her women and servants, her letter writing, her diversions with her tame turtle-doves, Barbary pigeons and pet dogs. She was always hoping that some events would occur or some circumstances would arise which she could turn to her account and through which she could achieve her liberty, but after the execution of Norfolk these hopes became faint. A low state of health may have brought her to some resignation; it is astonishing that her spirits resisted as they did disease and imprisonment.

She lived in comfort and even in some state, but was strictly guarded, and it was not so easy now, as it had been when she first came to England, for her to communicate with her friends in Scotland and on the Continent. She was also humiliated by lack of money, being sometimes unable to pay her servants' wages or her physician's fees. The famous jewels she never obtained; they had fallen into the possession of Colin, Earl of Argyll, who married Agnes Keith, daughter of the Earl Marischal and widow of the Regent, who thus became guardian of the precious jewels of which Moray had taken possession on Mary's removal to Lochleven. Morton made bold and insistent attempts to get hold of this vast treasure, which Argyll and his wife refused, however, to deliver; the question of this costly hoard created a great deal of excitement. There was a vast number of these gems of considerable richness and variety, not only valuable for their intrinsic value but for the elaborate settings. They were worth a considerable fortune, which was exaggerated in the eyes of the Regent Morton because of his own poverty and that of the country which he ruled. He prevailed finally over Argyll and Mary's beloved trinkets went into the rapacious hands of the Douglas.

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Mary's life after the death of Norfolk took on a definite melancholy. There was no more passion, no more violent revolts, no more talk of marriage or betrothal, even the plots and schemes have a mechanical and disheartened air. It is not likely that she had much hope. Purged of many faults and follies by her long suffering, broken by ill-health and perpetual cruel disappointments, the figure of Mary becomes in the extreme sad and wistful. The little presents that she made for Elizabeth strike a pathetic note—one was a cloak of carnation satin, embroidered with silver thread, another a coif with collar sleeves and other little pieces belonging to the set, all of which were executed as "charmingly as possible", which were presented by the French Ambassador to Elizabeth from the Queen of Scots as a New Year present.

While Mary was contriving to find the costly materials for this exquisite work which had become her one diversion, her very servants were mutinying for lack of wages. The uncle, the Cardinal of Lorraine, to whom for so many years she had sent her complaints and her lamentations and her entreaties, died at Avignon in 1575; her two cousins, the Duke of Guise and the Cardinal of Guise, though among the most notable men in Europe, were able to do but little for Mary.

Mary, abandoned by France in a desperate attempt to placate Elizabeth, signed a declaration by which she declared herself an enemy against anyone who should plot against the English Queen; she did not, however, cease to plot herself when she had a chance.

Shrewsbury and his wife had incurred Elizabeth's deep anger by marrying their daughter to Lord Charles Stewart, the young brother of King Henry. The issue of this match was the unhappy Lady Arabella Stewart, hounded to death by James VI and I. Despite this vexation, however, Elizabeth continued to leave Mary in the charge of Shrewsbury and his wife, and this though tales that the Earl had been fascinated by his captive were becoming subjects of gossip.

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Mary's son began to be a factor in her story. The thought of him must have been an added pang to her sorrows. He was being educated as a Protestant by her enemies, he was being taught to hate her memory, he had been put in her place and this she would never allow: "He is but Lord Darnley or the Duke of Lennox," she would say. "I am the Queen of Scot-

land." She was tenacious of her rights; from the moment she had entered England she had pledged herself to keep the estate God had given her. "My last breath shall be that of a Queen."

She made various plots and schemes to get James out of Morton's hands. She tried to write to him, to send him little presents, a locket from her own device, a vest she had made and embroidered herself, little cannons and arrows of gold she had had especially cast for him. None of these little gifts was delivered.

James was still being educated by George Buchanan, who had so vilified his mother. She knew this and a copy of the "Detectio" had been sent her by Elizabeth. The thought that the man who had written those infamous charges against her was directing the education, forming the mind and character of her son, must have been of an almost insupportable bitterness, whether or no Mary knew that some of the accusations against her were true.

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George Buchanan enters so frequently into the life of Mary, he did her reputation such immense harm by his famous book, which was published not only in the smooth and scholarly Latin original, but in Scotch, English, and French, his authority for the most disputed incidents of her life is so often quoted and so often challenged that it is as well to consider what manner of man this was, who flattered the Queen, helped to ruin her, and refused to reconsider his violent condemnation.

Buchanan should be an exceedingly valuable witness to events that he had ample opportunity of knowing at first hand, and that he had the culture, experience, and intelligence to understand. Unfortunately, he has been proved (as in the Hermitage episode) so unreliable, and so many of his statements have no confirmation elsewhere (i.e., he is the sole authority for much that he writes) that doubt is cast on his whole narrative.

Despite this, some writers give Buchanan credence on some points, quoting from him where it suits their case, and point out with scorn his untrustworthiness in other instances. Such manipulation of historic material is indefensible, and the only honest way to treat George Buchanan's statements is to accept all of them with reserve unless they are confirmed from other sources. At the same time, it should be borne in mind that despite his malice, prejudice, grossness, and possible veniality, there may be some truth even in his most unlikely sounding tales.

George Buchanan was born in 1506, a farmer's son from Killeain, Stirling. By the help of an uncle, he received two years' training at the Sorbonne; poverty then compelled him to join the French troops being sent to Scotland to fight the English. His health broke down under the hardships of military life and he took up his studies again at the University of St. Andrews, and then at Paris, where he became a professor at the Collège de Sainte Barbe.

The Earl of Cassilis, whom he tutored for five years, presented him to James V, who employed him as tutor to one of his illegitimate sons, James Stewart, son of Elizabeth Shaw, who died in 1548. Buchanan then began to smell of the faggot and showed the trend of his meditations by a vindictive satire on the Franciscans, "*Franciscanus*", which brought him the enmity of Cardinal Beaton and a sojourn in prison.

From there he escaped and again fled to France; in Bordeaux he found a scholastic post and exercised in peace his great talents and deep learning, writing original Latin plays and translating Euripides. The plague sent him again on his travels (1543) and he became one of the tutors to Montaigne. Soon after he was teaching at the University of Coimbra, where he fell into the suspicions of the Inquisition of Portugal who enclosed him in a monastery to refresh his orthodox zeal.

This period Buchanan employed in writing his beautiful Latin versions of the Psalms.

As soon as he was released he again went to France, where he became tutor to the son of the Maréchal de Brissac. He wrote a flattering poem to Mary on the occasion of her first marriage and seems to have given her some lessons in the classics. He returned to Scotland in 1560, embraced the principles of the Reformation, and became a partisan of Moray. At the same time he seems to have been acceptable to Mary, for whom and to whom he continued to write laudatory verses, the panegyrics addressed to the Queen even so late as the baptism of her son being of his composition. This the Queen had rewarded by a gift of the revenues of the Abbey of Crossraguel.

After Mary's downfall, Buchanan, either from conviction of her guilt, or from self-interest or carelessness, became the Queen's most dangerous enemy. Moray made him Rector of a College in Saint Andrews and Moderator of the General Assembly (1567).

The famous book against Mary—"De Maria Scotorum Regina," etc., appeared first in London, 1571. When translated

into the vernacular the book had considerable popular success. Elizabeth sent the author, who had, at the time of the Westminster Conference, dedicated a set of verses to her, a hundred pounds.

Buchanan repeated his opinion of Queen Mary in the 17th and 18th Books of his History of Scotland, and refused to retract it, even at the instance of the young pupil, James VI.

It must be noted that Buchanan and Knox were not alone in their violent condemnation of Mary. Other members of the Calvinist party regarded her with almost incredible hatred—witness Captain Clark, the Scotch mercenary who endeavoured to secure the surrender of Bothwell from Frederick II, who openly regretted that Moray had not slain this Jezebel and cast her blood and bones to the dogs.

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James, a nervous, awkward, plain boy and a brilliant scholar, possessed a shrewd natural sense and was, to the last degree, cautious and timid; he was beginning to form his own judgment on the events about him and on the people who surrounded him. When he was twelve years old, a quick rebellion headed by Argyll and Atholl was organized for the purpose of getting the young King out of the hands of Morton. It was successful. James demanded the Regent's resignation, which Morton rendered with outward indifference. As Randolph's report reads: "All the devils in Hell are stirring and in great rage in this country. The Regent is discharged, the country broken."

A Council took charge of the young King and the affairs of Scotland and demanded of Morton the delivery of Edinburgh Castle, of Holyrood, of the Mint, and the Queen's Jewels; he obeyed, and retired from the Capital.

Perhaps Mary may have heard this news with something of a glimmering hope. With the wicked and implacable Morton gone, might she not venture to dream of some restoration to at least partial honour and liberty? Could she not contrive some access to the boy who ruled in her place?

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In the April of that year, 1578, occurred another event which, when Mary heard of it, must have evoked some strange memories. Bothwell died in the Fortress of Dragsholm in Zealand on the North coast of Denmark, where he had been ten years a prisoner.

Legend has gathered thickly round Mary's last husband and it may be of interest to relate the known facts of his later life.

Bothwell left Dunbar, which was well fortified, with his servants on June 27th, 1567, in two vessels fitted out by himself. It is probable that he sailed for the North-west in the hopes of raising a party for the Queen.

After visiting at Spynie the Bishop his uncle, who was supposed to have given him so ill a training, Bothwell proceeded north towards the Dukedom he held by virtue of Queen Mary's patent that he carried with him. The Bailiff of Orkney, Gilbert Balfour, however, though Bothwell's man and even suspected of complicity in the Kirk o' Field crime, refused to shelter his fallen chieftain, and Bothwell fled even further north, towards Shetland.

Here he succeeded in hiring two ships belonging to merchants of the Hansa towns, the Shetlands then doing a brisk trade in fish, frieze, and horses against corn, beer, whisky, and linen. One of these ships was named "The Pelican". As the contract for these ships is known to have been willingly granted and was legal, it is not correct to term Bothwell "pirate" from this date, as most English writers do. Bothwell still considered himself Lord High Admiral of Scotland, and husband to the Queen, and was undertaking an expedition as legitimate as most of such enterprises, to obtain help for her and himself. There was more of the businesslike deal about the transaction than the romantic sea rover affair that it is generally represented.

Moray fitted out four ships to seize Bothwell, "The Unicorn", "The Primrose", "The James", "The Robert". The Bishop who had married the Queen made amends for that rash act, for which he had had to do penance, by being on board one of these. Kirkcaldy's ship, "The Unicorn," split on a rock in Bressay Sound, that still bears this name.

The connection between Denmark and Scotland was of long standing, there was a Scotch Guild at Copenhagen, Scotch professors at her University, Scotch mercenaries in the army of Frederick II, and even "Scotch beds" in the hospitals of the capital.

It was not unreasonable for a desperate man to hope that some recognition and assistance might be forthcoming from the Danish King whose acquaintance he had made in the days of

his splendour, though it is possible that Bothwell really intended to visit Eric XIV of Sweden, and was only driven by a storm on the coasts of Denmark.

In 1560, the Lord High Admiral of Scotland had been courteously entertained by the young King who, together with the Duke of Holstein, had conducted him through Jutland and Holstein.

In 1567, Fredrick II, who had been a suitor for the hand of Mary, was still unmarried, and it has been suggested that he felt some spite against one who had been preferred to himself. A far more practical reason for his coldness towards Bothwell rested in the fact that that Prince in the short period of his power had prevented the Scotch privateers from harrying the ships of the Swedish King, with whom Frederick was conducting the Seven Years' (Northern) War.

Scarcely had the Scotch ships cast anchor off the Island of Karm before they were accosted by a Danish warship under the command of Christian Aalborg, who, finding they had no papers or passports of any kind, and not liking the look of them despite their professed friendliness, contrived by trickery to disperse the formidable crews, and to put the ships under arrest.

Bothwell remained in disguise till the last; when forced to disclose himself he was wearing "old, torn, coarse boatswain's clothes". He protested bitterly against his arrest and fiercely regretted that the Danes' subterfuge had prevented him from deciding the issue by a fight.

He carried off the situation with an air, declaring that he was the Queen's husband, and "from whom should he get a passport, who was the supreme ruler in the country?"

Impressed, but not satisfied, the Danes detained the Earl at Bergen, where he was much honoured by Eric Rosenkrands of Valsö, the Commandant, who gave him a rich banquet (28th September, 1567) and every courtesy.

Two unpleasant incidents, neither of them romantic, galled the frustrated Bothwell. The Captain who had steered his ship across the North Sea was discovered by the police to be one wanted for stealing "twenty-two barrels of beer and four barrels of bread" and consequently sent to prison. The other humiliation was a personal one. The long-since discarded Danish bride, Anne Throndsson, known in Bergen as "the Scotch lady", heard of her faithless lover's plight and summoned him for breach of promise.

Her feelings do not seem to have been tinged by sentiment—she wanted compensation for the pecuniary losses she had suffered through the affair; perhaps a dowry had been paid over. Bothwell had to attend the Law Courts and hear the prudent lady read aloud his love letters, full of false promises, that she had so wisely preserved. The case was clear, as the Lady Anne coolly remarked “he had three wives alive”. And this claimant had to be bought off with a gift of one of the small ships the Earl had lying in the harbour and the exceedingly dubious promise of an annuity from Scotland. The Lady Anne was not driven to this shrewd deal by poverty, since her magnificence startled her contemporaries and she appeared in the same month as her law suit, arrayed in red damask, gold chains, wreaths and feathers of pearls, and necklaces of precious stones.

All Bothwell’s protestations were without effect, he was kept a prisoner in Bergen. A search of one of his ships revealed a letter-case which the Danish authorities opened and discovered that the Earl had “not left his country without good cause”. In brief, these letters revealed the whole state of affairs in Scotland (which the Danes do not seem to have known) and put suspicion on Bothwell as a murderer and an outlaw. There was also a “lamenting letter from the Queen” in which she bewailed herself and all her friends. This, unfortunately, has been lost, but it appears to have been noncommittal.

Bothwell, now an object of deep suspicion in the eyes of his captors, was taken to Copenhagen. He was allowed only a few servants and was forced to abandon his ships and his followers as well as all his property. In the Capital he was received by the High Steward of the Realm, Peter Oke, who placed the “Scottish King” as Frederick II termed him, in the Castle as a prisoner. On December 15th, 1567, the Lyon Herald, Sir William Stewart (afterwards burnt as a wizard by Moray), arrived with the demand from the Regent for the surrender of Bothwell.

The unhappy captive continued to protest his innocence of the alleged crimes, to rail against his enemies and to write useless letters to the King of France and to demand interviews with Frederick II. Among his requests was one that reveals the humiliation of the gentleman who had been so magnificent. Would His Majesty, wrote Peter Oke, advance the prisoner twenty dollars with which to buy clothes?

A year after Mary had brought her sick husband to Kirk o' Field (January, 1567), Bothwell was rowed across the Sound from Copenhagen to Malmoe Castle (January, 1568). He was given into the charge of the Commander, Björn Kaas, and there were personal instructions from the King that he was to have "the arched chamber with the small closet walled up . . . and if the windows with the iron trellis be not quite strong, you shall see to that". Bothwell had escaped, as was supposed, from Edinburgh Castle by twisting the window bars, but in Malmoe he was better kept and we do not even hear of an attempt at freedom from one so daring, so impatient and so strong.

The history of Bothwell in Malmoe is much that of Mary in her various prisons, frantic and hopeless pleas, reasonings, intrigues for release. In sheer desperation Bothwell offered his patent of Orkney to Frederick II—the Islands had long been objects of envy to the Danish Kings. In 1569, two of the servants who had been allowed him, Nicolas Hubert, and William Murray, were handed over to the Scotch—and to a fate that Bothwell could, no doubt, well guess.

It is likely enough that he knew the type of instrument he had employed and could foresee the miserable "Paris" would cringe to Moray by betraying all he knew of his master.

Intrigue and counter-intrigue for Bothwell's release came to nothing. The murder of Moray (1570) did not help the captive of Malmoe, for the new Regent was Lennox, father of King Henry, and he pressed in earnest for the surrender of Bothwell.

This time the Danes would have given way, but the influence of Charles IX saved the husband of a Queen Dowager of France from the ignominy of a public trial for the murder of his predecessor. "Nothing in the world", wrote La Motte Fénélon, French Ambassador in England, "would be a greater scandal to the reputation of this poor Princess or a greater confusion to her affairs."

There are accounts, not altogether reliable, that at this period Mary entered into correspondence with Bothwell, who was allowed considerable liberty at Malmoe. It is even said that she wished, before Langside, to send Hepburn of Riccartoun to Bothwell with a message, but it is certain that from Bolton in October 1568, she was already agitating for a divorce in the

hopes of the Norfolk marriage. There is an assertion, unsupported by direct evidence, that Bothwell assented to an annulment of the marriage, 1569. Thomas Buchanan, Lennox' envoy to Copenhagen, informed Cecil that a certain Horsey and a Danish boy were trying to carry letters to and from Bothwell and Mary. One hopes that it may be true.

Until 1573, Bothwell was treated with considerable indulgence and had even received from the King those gifts then valued by men of quality—rolls of silk, brocade, and velvet, for clothes, so that the first six years of the Earl's imprisonment form a commonplace tale.

But in 1573 the case of Bothwell began to grow dark, mysterious, and full of horror. M. Dançay, the French Ambassador in Copenhagen, wrote on the 28th June of that year to Charles IX: "The King of Denmark, who has hitherto treated the Earl of Bothwell very well, has a few days ago sent him to a much closer and worse prison." The reason for this severity is not known, nor is the name of the "*malaise et étroite prison*" undisputed. It is believed to have been Dragsholm, in Zealand.

After this date, information about the captive is scanty. In 1575, it was reported that he was dead, and this date is given in some recent books. This rumour had reached Cecil, who afterwards noted that "Bothwell is but great swollen and not dead". It would seem as if the wretched captive, then about thirty-seven years of age, suffered from dropsy.

This year, 1575, saw the deaths of his mother, Agnes Sinclair, the Lady of Morham, and that of the old Bishop of Moray. It is believed that Bothwell died in 1578; this date is given by Buchanan, writing in 1582. This exasperating, unreliable authority is the first to state that Bothwell died insane.

Melville writes that "he was kept in a strait prison wherein he became mad and died miserably". Mary's loyal adherent, Lord Herries, states in his Memoirs: "Being overgrown with hair and filth he went mad and died." Spottiswood, in his "History of the Church of Scotland", wrote: "He was put in a vile and loathsome prison, and, falling in a frenzy, made an ignominious and desperate end" and "desperate of liberty he turned mad". The writer in the Fugger news-letter, describing the execution of Mary, refers to her complicity in Darnley's murder and Bothwell's madness as common knowledge. However, all these writers may have been deceived by false rumours

and gossip. All that is certain is that Bothwell died, somewhere about this date, in prison. It is also a fact that Mary, in her own captivity, was tormented by the report that Bothwell had left a Testament (Will or dying declaration) in which he took on himself all the guilt of Kirk o' Field and, as Mary wrote to Beaton on June 1st, 1576, "testified by his soul salvation to my innocence".

It is doubtful if such a document would have much impressed Mary's enemies but she was so anxious to secure it that if she could have found the money she would have sent a messenger to Denmark to obtain it. Beaton could not find the funds and the matter had to drop, to the poor captive's deep chagrin. The history of this supposed document is complicated and it is now believed that it never existed, or was spurious, the best argument for this being that when James VI in 1590 was in Denmark with his bride, Anne, Frederick's daughter, he spent the winter in Zealand and showed the greatest interest in every object of curiosity, and he made no attempt to discover, nor did any bring to his notice, the document that proclaimed his mother innocent.

The contemporaries of Bothwell must all have been living and accessible, and with the King was Sir James Melville, John Maitland, younger brother of Sir William, and Francis Stewart, fifth Earl Bothwell, who had inherited all his uncle's honours and estates. It was he who modernized Bothwell Castle in the fashionable Italianate style. None of these people made any mention of the famous Testament. Nor did Francis Stewart, though he had been a passionate champion of Mary, his godmother, against the indifference of her son, offer a Scotch grave to the man whose vast estates he had inherited. This fifth Earl Bothwell, it may be recalled, was the son of Moray's brother and Mary's half-brother, John Stewart, who had died soon after his birth; he was, therefore, a grandson of James IV. This stormy character also forfeited the splendid Hepburn estates and honours, also fled to the Orkneys and Shetlands, and died in Naples, a Romanist.

This is what the industry of historians have been able to disclose about the last years, usually ignored by Mary's biographers, of her third husband. For once common sense and tradition seem to agree; it would not, surely, have taken many years of a solitary confinement to drive to madness the strong, passionate, reckless man so used to action and a lustful life.

He died too late to benefit Mary; it was when she no longer needed a divorce that he set her free. Perhaps she had almost forgotten him, perhaps she was only a little sorry. He was a man whom all parties had agreed to blame, to depict almost as a monster, but he was no worse than many of his contemporaries and better than some. If he was a murderer so were many of those who accused and hounded him for a crime in which they also had a share. "Lewd-minded and blinded by ambition" he may have been, but there were many others with these same faults, though perhaps with better luck or greater cunning. It is as repulsive to contemplate the imprisonment of such a man as to gaze at a caged eagle.

He died without disclosing his mind to any, or, if he did so, there was none to report it. Some memoirs, purporting to be his, in which he cleared Mary of all complicity in the King's murder, are not utterly discredited as a forgery.

In the little church at Faarveile, an embalmed body was long preserved which, though nameless, was reasonably supposed to be that of James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, Duke of Orkney. Mary's last husband, if indeed it be he, long lay in this isolated church some twenty miles from the Castle where he died. One curious in the matter was allowed to inspect the body some years ago and described it as lying in an oak chest with the head on white silk, wrapped in a winding sheet. The features were still recognizable; it was possible to judge something of what the man of whom no authentic portrait exists, had been like. If this body was that of Bothwell, he was not very tall, finely made, with delicate, aristocratic hands and feet, a clean-shaven face, a wide mouth, arched nose, and red hair. This will do well enough for a description of Bothwell.

He resembled Mary in that his fascination, probably like hers, that of intense vitality and bold zest in life, died with him. Du Croc's picture of him in Carberry Hill, when he faced utter defeat with a jest, lingers in the mind.

Another writer's description of Bothwell "raving in chains" is ugly enough. Much has been written of the long torture of Mary; the punishment of Bothwell, with which no poet or romanticist has concerned himself, seems as poignant and terrible.

In the year of Bothwell's death, a collection of "godly and spiritual songs" was published in Edinburgh; one of them

might apply to this great sinner, who was thought to be of "no religion", but who would not go to Mass:

*"With sins I am laden sore
Leave me not! Leave me not!
With sins I am laden sore
Leave me not alone!
I pray thee, Lord, therefore
Keep not my sins in store
Loose me, or I be forlorn
And hear my moan.*

*"Faith, Hope, and Charity
Leave me not! Leave me not!
Faith, Hope, and Charity
Leave me not alone!
I pray thee, Lord, grant me
These godly gifts three
Then shall I saved be,
Doubts have I none."*

These and other religious songs and poems, written in Scotland at this period, prove that there was some spiritual feeling, some tormented sense of sin in this land so confused with war and crime.

Mary had nearly ten more years to live after Bothwell's death—years for her empty and miserable beyond description. She remained in Chatsworth, going occasionally to the baths at Buxton for her health's sake. All her desires were thwarted, all her hopes frustrated.¹ She was frequently so ill that it was confidently predicted that she would die; she suffered from some definite internal complaint due to her suffering and hardship in Scotland, possibly accentuated by the dampness of her English prison, and from mental misery, so that from year to year she pined and wasted, fretted and withered. Scottish events continued to move in blood and fury. Morton, by a *coup d'état* regained power, re-established himself in the Regency, but lost this, and his life also, under curious circumstances in 1580, the outward semblance of which was this:

A certain soldier of fortune, a Mr. James Stewart, son of Lord Ochiltree, and curiously, a brother-in-law of Knox, was

¹ By a will, February, 1577, Mary, despairing, since the treaty of Blois, of France, left all her rights in the two kingdoms to Philip II; a desperate, unsuccess~~ful~~ move.

Captain of the Guard at Holyrood and while the King, then a youth of fifteen, was holding a Council in this palace, entered the room, and casting himself before James, declared he wished to reveal a crime which had been too long hidden.

He then, with amazing courage, pointed to Morton, accused him of the murder of the King's father, and demanded his arrest.

This dramatic scene must have been the result of a pre-arranged plot; Stewart could not have undertaken so much on his own initiative. He was immediately backed up by the other nobles present, who seized Morton and hurried him a prisoner to Dumbarton Castle. There he was kept for five months. Elizabeth made every effort to save him but James Stewart was created Earl of Arran and taken into favour by James who, bred in a hard school and used to violence, had begun to show some initiative, and under some impulse of curiosity or compassion or the influence of the new favourite, sent his mother a letter and a present to her English prison. This was the first communication she had ever received from him, which gave her a sincere, if bitter pleasure, arousing ambition as well as affection.

Morton remained in Dumbarton Castle for several months and was tried for the murder of King Henry on the 1st of June, 1581. He confessed that he had been "art and part" in this crime; that he had known of it and concealed it. He was found guilty, his estates declared forfeit, and he was executed at the Market Cross of Edinburgh, his body afterwards being drawn and quartered. He had not a single friend and was regretted by none. His miserable remains were treated with contempt and left lying on the scaffold merely covered by an old cloak.

This Black or as some name him, Red Douglas, was the first to suffer by the famous "Maiden", an instrument for public execution which he had himself brought from Halifax.

It would have seemed that this would have been a good opportunity to extract from Morton a full and clear account of that mysterious crime of Kirk o' Field, and a confession as to the authenticity of the Casket Letters. Nothing of this was done and beyond a statement that he himself had helped in the murder, together with Maitland and Bothwell, Morton died leaving the puzzling affair obscure.

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Mary was too ill at this time to find any satisfaction in this glutting of her revenge. Her high-spirited vindictiveness had passed or was in abeyance, she no longer dreamed of triumphing over her enemies, she only wanted freedom. Some consolation must have been the correspondence and exchanging of presents which then took place between her and her son, who seems, under whose influence we do not know, to have turned towards his captive mother. She must have been most vilely spoken of to him and heartlessly traduced in his presence. But perhaps he was already quick enough to realize that there were two sides to every question, and that Mary might be no worse than many of those who defamed her so glibly.

In this year, 1581, Pierre Ronsard dedicated a volume of his poems to the captive Queen, whom he remembered as so bright and lovely, so brilliant and exquisite. She was touched by this gracious compliment and out of her restricted means sent him a casket full of money and a silver vase with the device of Pegasus drinking at the Muses' fountain.

* * * *

By August, 1585, Mary was willing to renounce everything in exchange for bare liberty. Though so many of her Scotch enemies were dead, she knew that her son would have little compassion on her. He had concluded an alliance with England and his mother disowned and cursed him.¹

She was ill, she was broken, the conditions of her prison were wretched, she was spied upon and cut off from her friends and she would come to any terms which might procure her release.

The last portrait that we have of Mary dates from the period of her imprisonment at Sheffield Castle; there are many versions of this in existence and experts are divided in opinion as to which is the original, but it is generally supposed that this honour may be claimed for the picture in the possession of the Duke of Devonshire at present at Hardwick Hall.

It is a poor piece of work, probably the effort of some journeyman painter who received permission from Shrewsbury to make this portrait of his famous prisoner. It is believed that this is the portrait referred to by Mary's secretary, Claude Nau, when he wrote to the Archbishop of Glasgow in August, 1577.

¹ In a letter to Elizabeth, May, 1585. This same month Mary again made over her rights to Philip II in a letter to Mendoza, Spanish Ambassador in London, which was intercepted by Walsingham.

On the other hand, Nau may refer to some lost miniature from which this life-size portrait and others are copies. This picture, which has a Latin inscription saying that it represents Mary Queen of Scots at the age of thirty-six, is dated 1578, the year of Bothwell's death, and represents Mary in full mourning, her usual attire during her captivity, and the only one which she considered appropriate to her state. But, at this period, she may have been in official mourning for her mother-in-law, the Countess of Lennox, who had recently died at Hackney, and her brother-in-law, the young Earl of Lennox, who had married the Countess of Shrewsbury's daughter, and possibly for her last husband, though this does not seem likely.

Poorly as the face is painted, it is obviously the same countenance with which we have become acquainted in the authentic portraits of Mary's earlier life. Here is the high forehead, the clusters of rich hair—in this case almost certainly a periwig—the slightly aquiline nose, the narrow upper lip, the eyes with the sideways, furtive glance, and the long, smooth oval of the face, which is flat and shadowless.

In this picture, which was extensively copied for memorial portraits, Mary is represented in the guise in which she was to be known to posterity, in heavy black with the lawn chemisette, the deep ruff divided at the base of the throat, the tight curls of hair, and rosary and crucifix, with the diaphanous lawn veil giving some grace and dignity to the stiff formal attire and rosary and crucifix. The ornaments are of jet, enamel, and gold.

The picture is signed "P. Oudry", but it may nevertheless be the work of a copyist.

Neither this picture nor any of the many variations of it convey the least idea of bewitching charm or seductive beauty. The features are hard and sharp, the attitude stiff and unnatural, even the hands large and ungainly. There is no hint of personality, nor even of the dignity and pathos that Mary must have possessed to the last—that of a brilliant, beautiful woman, broken in health and fortune, but preserving a dauntless spirit.

The disappointment caused in the spectators by this picture must be the fault of the painter. It is indeed, as were too many portraits executed in England at this period, a wretched piece of work.

All we can learn from it as regards Mary's appearance in the last phase of her life is that she looked darkened and faded,

wore cumbrous mourning, and kept ostentatiously about her person the insignia of her Faith—the crucifix and the rosary.

Mary Stewart's position had become more difficult ever since the massacre of St. Bartholomew. This grim event, organized by Catherine de' Medici and her advisers, countenanced by the King of France and approved by the Pope, seemed to the Protestants of Europe a confirmation of their worst fears. They had long suspected that the Roman Catholics were arranging some such series of massacres with the intention of completely wiping out the heretics. The Englishmen's memory of the Marian Persecution were revived and the rage and horror with which the wholesale murder of their co-religionists across the Channel was regarded was mingled with a fear for their own safety. It was considered quite possible that a French or Spanish invasion, backed by the Pope, might end in such a day of wholesale slaughter in London as Paris had just endured, and it was natural that the Protestant Englishmen and the Protestant government of Elizabeth should regard with fear and detestation the figure of the Scottish Queen, who, having fled headlong from her own country, branded with horrible crimes, had used the protection afforded her by Elizabeth to hatch plots with Roman Catholic enemies of the State, and to foment rebellion with Roman Catholic subjects of the Queen.

As it was natural for Mary to fly to England seeing she had nowhere else to go and that Elizabeth had offered her some encouragement, and reasonable that finding herself detained in English custody she should plot and scheme for her release and seek the aid of the English Roman Catholics, involve men like Norfolk, Northumberland, and Westmoreland, appeal for help from France and Spain and the Pope, so it was natural that Elizabeth and her advisers should seek to thwart her in all these desperate activities.

While Mary was languishing and fretting under an intolerable sense of injustice, Elizabeth did not believe that she had behaved badly towards her captive. She argued that she had given Mary an asylum when no one else would do so and that she had saved her from the shameful and hideous death that the Scots were preparing for her, that she had maintained her in state and comfort and respect, allowing her a large amount of ease and freedom. Nor did Elizabeth see that she had acted with injustice in dissolving the Conference at Westminster which had

sat to examine Mary's troubles by a verdict of "Not Proven" for both Moray and his half-sister. She thought that in refusing a complete investigation into Mary's scandalous affairs she had done that lady a service. Whether the "casket letters" were forged or no, whether the Lords lied or no (and assuredly Elizabeth and Cecil knew that they did lie on many important points), it is obvious that Mary was unable to prove that innocence which she protested with so many frantic lamentations and with so many strange, evasive and affected arguments.

Elizabeth believed that she had acted wisely in not allowing a public inquiry to take place, which would have split her country into factions and probably in the end have robbed Mary of what little dignity and honour she still possessed. Considering that when the Queen of Scots fled to England she had the worst of reputations, and that Elizabeth probably believed in the authenticity of the "casket letters", it may be allowed that her behaviour to Mary had not been ungenerous. She, at least, thought it was, and she had always been acutely aware of the perils that the Queen of Scots represented to England, the Reformed Religion, and to herself.

Soon after Mary's arrival in England, Burleigh, in words the wisdom of which must have been very apparent to Elizabeth, had pointed out to his Queen the perils she might expect from Mary Stewart—"the unfortunate case of the Queen of Scots which has become so troublesome to Your Majesty" as he termed it, adding: "The Queen of Scots indeed is, and shall always be, a dangerous person to your estate. Yet there be degrees whereby the danger may be more or less. If Your Majesty would marry it should be less, and whilst you do not it will increase. If her person be restrained, either here or at home in her own country it will be less, if she be at liberty it will be greater. If she be considered to be unable by law to have any husband than Bothwell while he lived, the peril is the less; if she be esteemed free from the marriage it is the greater. If she be declared an offender in the murder of her husband she shall be less able to be a person perilous, if her offence be passed over in silence the same will wear out and the danger be greater."

By the time that Mary had been a prisoner in England ten years or more, Burleigh's prophecies of evil had come to pass; Elizabeth had not married, nor was it likely, despite her long and sterile coquetry with Mary's brother-in-law, François de

Valois, Duc d'Alençon, that she ever would do so, and even if she did it was unlikely that she would have children. Mary was free of Bothwell, and she had not been declared guilty of the murder of her husband, and her offence *had* been passed over in silence, her shame *was* "wearing out", while foreign events, such as the massacre of St. Bartholomew and the discovery of constant foreign plots against England, had increased the fear and terror of the English Protestants against all the Queen of Scots represented.

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It might be argued that Elizabeth could have washed her hands of the Queen of Scots by returning her either to her own country or by allowing her to proceed abroad. The first she could scarcely do while she supported the Reformed Faith and the Sovereignty of James VI in Scotland, for the arrival of Mary in that kingdom would be the signal for a civil war that Elizabeth well knew might end in the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic ascendancy—an event which it was Elizabeth's policy by all means to avoid. As for sending Mary abroad, she might have formed an alliance there that would have been most dangerous to England, married a French or a Spanish prince, and returned backed by her foreign husband's army to revenge herself upon England. It was a matter of sheer statecraft for Elizabeth to keep Mary a prisoner.

Probably neither she nor Burleigh nor any other of her advisers was much impressed by Mary's letters, piteous as they were. The Queen of Scots had the reputation of being plausible, artful, and not truthful. It is not likely that her frantic promises would be redeemed once she was free. A captive's word is no more to be trusted than that of a man on the rack —anything will be promised to stop the torture.

Added to this natural disgust of Mary and of her circumstances was the fact that Elizabeth could never forgive nor forget that the Queen of Scots had intrigued against her, betrothed herself secretly to Norfolk, inflamed a rebellion in the North, invited foreign powers to send money and troops to her aid. If Mary could have learned her bitter lesson, that she was utterly defeated, uncrowned, and dishonoured when she fled from Langside, the rest of her life might have known some degree of happiness. But it is hard for an ardent spirit of twenty-four to admit that all the glories of life are over. Mary, incapable of ruling, continued to thirst for sovereignty.

She had made a grim failure of her brief reign and yet she would at any cost be a Queen again. Two marriages of folly and passion had brought her to the depths of humiliation, disgrace and danger, yet she would essay, on the first chance, yet another marriage and this with a man whom she scarcely knew and who had neither the youth and beauty of Henry Stewart, nor the courage and strength of Bothwell to recommend him.

Could Mary have resigned herself to a private life and convinced others that she was so resigned, she might have been allowed her liberty and found constant consolation for her lost splendours in the pleasures and duties of an ordinary woman. But she was born too high for this; she seemed to love the storm; the safety and comfort of her easy cage fretted her to the bone, she would beat out her wild heart against the bars in a frantic desire to escape once more into that tempest which assuredly, had she known it, would have immediately dashed her to pieces.

It is impossible to believe that after Langside Mary could have found anywhere more peace, comfort and security than she discovered in the asylum with Elizabeth which she so loathed and against which she raged so furiously. Even her ill-health could not quench her restless discontent. Her piety may have been deep but it brought her little or no consolation; her thoughts seems to have been ever of this world, and her prayers to have consisted of entreaties to Heaven for vengeance on her foes. Never did she relinquish her Royal right, never did she admit herself in the wrong, seldom did she glance at the suffering and death of those who had fallen because they had mingled in her fortunes.

She wept continually at her own disasters, at her own disappointed ambitions. Her agonized tears for the capture of Northumberland disfigured her for days, she was prostrate in her chamber for a long period after the sentence on Norfolk. Not because (though she may have felt some compassion) of pity towards these victims of her intrigues, but because they were tools that had broken in her hand. Had she really felt remorse and horror at the blood which continued to be shed in her cause, she would have withdrawn from these plots and have ceased to entice others to risk everything in schemes to assist and free her, and sincerely resigned herself to an attempt to achieve some inward peace of mind and mental tranquillity

which were truly all that the world could offer her. This the Queen of Scots could not do, and the Queen of England knew it.

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As James VI grew into manhood Mary had had piteous hopes of her son. Freed from her enemies, who had advised him to her disadvantage, surely he might do something towards her release and restoration? These hopes were encouraged by the letters which the young King of Scots sent to his mother, protesting a certain conventional love and affection he could have scarcely felt, for she was nothing but a name to him and he could hardly ever have forgiven her that she had made it possible for his foes to taunt him as being the son of "Signor Davy".

Whatever chance Mary Stewart might have had with her son was frustrated by the very ambition which he had inherited from her. As she had longed to be Queen of England, so did he long to be King of England, and as a man and a Protestant, he had a far better chance than had ever been hers, especially as the years passed and Elizabeth remained unwed. The lure of the English Crown was far more to this pedantic, ungainly, timid youth who had nothing whatever of Stewart grace, fire, or charm, than the piteous tragedy of his ageing mother. He was Elizabeth's pensioner, as Moray had been Elizabeth's pensioner, and he would never offend the Queen of England. He, the pupil of George Buchanan, pondered much on his mother's case. "As strange," he said, "as any that has ever been heard of in history." Perhaps he pondered a little over his father, and also over the stories of Rizzio and Bothwell.

He was obsessed with the doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings which he was later to impose successfully upon Scotland and fatally upon his son. He was absorbed in a passion of friendship with the first of his fantastic favourites, that James Stewart who had caused the overthrow of Morton, and to whom he had given the title of the imbecile James Hamilton —that of Earl of Arran.

Between these two interests, his own aggrandizement and the caprices of his unscrupulous favourite, James had no room for his mother in his narrow heart. Did he know of the little reins she had worked for him, of the vest she had embroidered, of his portrait that she kept above her bed, of the toy cannons and arrows that never were delivered? Did he ever, in fancy,

put himself into the poor captive's place?—it may have been so. We hear that in later life he turned faint and sick and looked aside when his mother was mentioned. But he resolved to do nothing for her; whatever the fate Elizabeth held in store for his mother, James of Scotland would not interfere.

During the whole of Mary's imprisonment many people had realized that the only solution to her problems would be death. As long as she lived she would be troublesome, a potential danger to Queen and State. There had been many tentative suggestions for her destruction, among them those of delivering her to Scotland to stand her trial or secret assassination. But Elizabeth did not wish to have this deed upon her conscience—the thought of putting to death a fellow Sovereign, a kinswoman, and one who had in a way thrown herself upon her mercy was odious to her. She wished Mary out of the way eagerly enough, but she was bitterly resentful of incurring the odium of either Mary's murder or her execution. Again and again she set her face against the popular demands for Mary's blood.

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Towards the year 1581, however, various combinations of events began to cause Elizabeth to agree with her Council in watching for an occasion to dispose of the Queen of Scots in the only certain way. There were signs of a Roman Catholic revival in England; Mary was the first Princess of the Blood and Elizabeth had been proclaimed a bastard and excommunicated by the Pope. Elizabeth and her advisers were disturbed by constant rumours of papal leagues and Roman Catholic plots.

One, at least, of these was genuine. Esmé Stewart, Sieur D'Aubigny, created Duke of Lennox by James, whose fickle fancy he had taken, was a Roman Catholic, and, though destitute of all the qualities required for such a scheme, made an endeavour to restore Catholicism in Scotland with the aid of Spain and the Pope and Mary's cousin, the Duke of Guise.

The plan proved abortive: Lennox died, James leaned away from the Roman Catholic party, Philip cooled off in his offers of help. Mary, whose liberation and restoration had been vaguely a part of the plan, and who had directed many details of it from her prison (Mendoza, the Spanish Ambassador, had written: "The Queen of Scots virtually manages all these matters; the Scots are unwilling to conduct themselves other-

wise than by her instructions and direction")—was yet again disappointed.

That such a plot existed and that Mary meddled in it, justifiably enough no doubt, shows what real danger Elizabeth had to fear. As long as Mary lived she might have been the focus of or the inspiration for a plot that *would* have succeeded.

On August 25th, 1580, the Protestants of Europe were enraged and alarmed by the Bann against the great heretic leader, William I, Prince of Orange. The importance of this Bann was, that it was formulated by the Pope and Philip II against the Stadholder of the Netherlands, and both authorized and encouraged his assassination by any one of the faithful who might feel inspired to undertake the deed. This Bann set, therefore, the precedence of the condonation of murder as a political and religious weapon. It gave the authorization of the Pope for assassination; the murder of a heretic by a Roman Catholic was *not only to be permitted, but praised and rewarded*. Burleigh had said, when Mary first entered England, that "a Papist with a dispensation from Rome would have few scruples".

The importance of this point can hardly be exaggerated; it set all Europe in a ferment of rage and suspicion. Elizabeth feared at once that her life would not be safe from attempts from her Roman Catholic subjects. Nor was she wrong.

Until the Bann against the Prince of Orange there had been no serious discussion of the project to assassinate Elizabeth, but after this there were many English Roman Catholics who longed to be rid of the "illegitimate daughter of Henry VIII" as they termed her, and to put Mary in her place, and who seriously considered, under Papal sanction, murdering the Queen.

So conscientious were some of these discontented Englishmen that they even sent an Oxford Doctor of Law abroad to ask for some leading ecclesiastical opinion on the subject. This envoy, Humphrey Eli, went to the Papal Nuncio at Madrid (who approved of assassination of heretics under the Bann), and also wrote to Rome to the Cardinal of Como, who sent his full approbation of any such scheme.

Elizabeth's real danger is, therefore, obvious. And as a natural sequence to this danger came the decision that Mary should not live: it only remained to arrange the manner of her destruction. The alarms and plots of the next few years helped to inflame the English indignation against the Bann,

which was raised to intolerable fury by the news of the assassination of the Prince of Orange in 1584.

Burleigh and Walsingham at once devised the Band of Association for the protection of Elizabeth. Several bloody outrages on unfortunate Roman Catholics such as Richard Whyte and Francis Throgmorton proved the popular rage and fear.

Elizabeth was agitated and alarmed, doubly suspicious of Mary, and gave with relief a tacit consent to the resolve of Lord Burleigh and Sir Francis Walsingham to destroy the Queen of Scots.

It does not seem proved that any definite scheme for privately making away with her in her prison was mooted at this period. In the case of a woman so closely confined and so often ill, this surely would not have been difficult, and, one thinks, more merciful and decorous than the course resolved upon. Secret assassination was not, however, the custom of the English Court, nor the expedient used by English statesmen—judicial murder had been brought to a fine art, and it was resolved to employ this means of destroying the woman who, diseased, tormented by pain and frustrated hopes, severely guarded, cut off from communication with her friends, waited in an agony of impatience for help from her wavering son, from her distant allies, from her friends near at hand.

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Mary affected a resignation that was not perhaps so much false as an apathy of despair. In the autumn of this year, 1584, of such agitation and ferment in England, she was in Wingfield Manor with a retinue of forty-eight people; she had just returned from the waters at Buxton, and she lay under the shade of some gossip accusing her of an intrigue with her keeper, the Earl of Shrewsbury.

Over a hundred gentlemen and soldiers guarded her apartments. Somers, one of Elizabeth's commissioners, visited her and she assumed some of her old, graceful animation and chatted about her son's matrimonial prospects—should it be a princess of Lorraine, of Florence, of Denmark, or Spain? After sixteen years of imprisonment she was old, and, she declared, cured of ambition. She would, if free, go to Scotland, but only to see her son: "I would go to France to live among my friends there, with my portion (dowry), and never trouble myself with government again; nor could I marry, seeing I have a son who is a man." This was a false resignation, but perhaps

Mary did not know herself that when another chance of escape, of power, of revenge was to be offered her she would, ill, aged, disabled, out of touch with the world as she was, seize it. Likely enough she did not herself realize, when she spoke these despairing words, that ambition was still smouldering in her exhausted spirit.

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Sir Francis Walsingham was the head of Elizabeth's Secret Service, which he had brought to a pitch of remarkable efficiency, and he used this in the scheme for Mary's destruction, popularly known as the Babington Plot, with an amount of patience, zeal, and skill that seems ridiculous when applied to the destruction of an unhappy woman who might have been put out of the way so much more easily.

The laws against the Roman Catholics (the famous "Twenty-seventh of Elizabeth") passed in the tumult of popular feeling roused by the assassination of the Prince of Orange, left Mary at the mercy of the English Government. In 1581 the "Twenty-third of Elizabeth" Chapter II, the so-called "Statute of Silence" had been passed, whereby it was treasonable even to discuss the Queen's possible successor—that was to be left to Act of Parliament. It was also high treason to be the object of any such plot. This law was probably directed against Mary and was, indeed, that under which she was eventually tried and executed. Under this "Statute of Silence" it would be possible for a completely innocent person to be "guilty of high treason" merely because someone else had plotted in his or her favour.

To this had come all the various schemes, intrigues, and arguments for and against the marriage of the Queen, for and against this person as her heir or heiress. All was to be silenced.

Burleigh and Walsingham, if not the alarmed Elizabeth herself, having decided to bring Mary to death under this law, set about to find the means. This was not difficult: Walsingham knew where to put his hands on spies, informers, forgers, and fools. The English Government had some hope that Mary might make an attempt to escape or that there might be an effort to rescue her from her captivity. In this event her swift death was certain, for her guards had orders to slay her rather than to allow her to leave her prison.

No such incident, however, saved them the trouble of

preparing and setting their trap, which with deliberate skill they proceeded to do.

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In 1583, there had been some plots countenanced by the Duke of Guise, Mary's cousin, for the assassination of Elizabeth. Two Englishmen were concerned in this—George Gifford and William Parry—who received an indulgence from Pope Gregory for the assassination, but betrayed everything to Queen Elizabeth, who, excited by the plot scare following the assassination of the Prince of Orange, rewarded Parry with the seat of Queensborough. This Parry, however, who seems to have played an uncertain double game, was one of the first to suffer under the ferocious laws against the Roman Catholics. Before his execution he had accused Mary's agent in Paris, Thomas Morgan, of plots against Elizabeth. This Morgan, though reckless and not very wise, was a loyal and diligent servant to Mary. She had largely employed him in obtaining her dowry from France, and conveying her correspondence abroad by means of the French Embassy.

He was in Paris when accused by Parry, and Elizabeth demanded of Henri III, who had never shown much zeal for Mary, his deliverance into her hands. The King of France refused to do this, but sent Morgan to the Bastille.

Walsingham decided to use this man to ruin Mary and set on him his spies, one of whom was a Scottish gentleman by the name of Robert Bruce; another was Robert Pooley, known to his friends as "Sweet Robin", while a third and most important instrument was George Gifford, a ruined rake who had been in trouble with the police and who had fled in 1583 to France, and offered to assassinate Elizabeth for the benefit of the Duke of Guise, which offer that Prince accepted, while the Papal Nuncio and the Spanish Ambassador agreed to remain passive and take advantage of the crime. It is not clear whether George, afterwards Sir George, Gifford had been sincere in this offer or if he had been even then in Walsingham's pay. Another of Walsingham's spies was Thomas Rogers or Berden, described as "a mean villain", and Gilbert Gifford, a cousin of George. William Gifford, a brother of George, was an honest man and rose to be Archbishop of Rheims and Primate of France.

Gilbert Gifford had been a priest in the English College of Rome, from whence he had been expelled, had become

a vagabond, repented, and been received into the seminary at Rheims, where he had begun to plot against the life of Elizabeth in 1583 with John Savage, Christopher Hodgson, and others.

George Gifford, acting under instructions from Walsingham or one of Walsingham's agents, got into touch with Morgan through his brother, who acted in all good faith and believed that he was introducing a faithful ally to Mary's service. Morgan never suspected that George Gifford was an English spy and gave him the necessary letters of introduction to Mary and the French Ambassador in London. He was to be employed in Mary's service taking to and fro correspondence, an office which Morgan, in the Bastille, was, of course, no longer able to perform.

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George Gifford landed at Rye on the 10th of December, 1585, was arrested and brought before Walsingham, probably by pre-arrangement. The pact for the destruction of Mary was then made. If Gifford, and this seems unlikely, had not been in Walsingham's pay before, he became from that moment his trusted spy and *agent-provocateur*. That is, he was to mingle with Mary's friends, get into Mary's confidence, and to lure her on into a plot against Elizabeth's life which should supply Walsingham with sufficient material to bring her to the block.

Morgan, who does not seem to have been quick-witted, and Mary, never a good judge of character and excited and agitated by her circumstances, were both deceived by Gifford's arrest, and from that moment seem to have implicitly trusted Walsingham's spy. The Queen of Scots had recently been moved from Tutbury to Chartley.

George Gifford called at the French Embassy for Mary's letters, which were brought in the Ambassador's bag as far as London, then delivered to the Ambassador, Guillaume de l'Aubespine, Baron de Châteauneuf, and then re-delivered to one of Mary's faithful secret messengers and by him passed eventually to the Queen.

Mary, at this time, was having considerable difficulty in receiving her correspondence. She was allowed a certain amount of official letters which, of course, did not satisfy her eager curiosity as to what was happening in the world outside her prison, and one of the few joys left in her starved and

wretched life was the arrival of these secret packets of letters which were very often not between her hands until they were several months old.

Gifford did not succeed at first in gaining the confidence of the French Embassy, though he had credentials from the Archbishop of Glasgow, from Morgan, and from Morgan's lieutenant, Charles Paget, which spoke highly of his fidelity to the Queen of Scots. Cordaillot, the Secretary of the French Embassy, who had been deputed to deal with Mary's affairs, thought however that Gifford seemed too young and simple and would not trust him with the important correspondence. The guileless-looking Gifford, who appeared ten or twelve years less than his real age, was lodging with Walsingham's servant, Thomas Phelippes, who was an expert in all manner of cypher. He glossed over this, which must have seemed a suspicious circumstance, to Mary's friends, by saying that he was endeavouring to learn some of Walsingham's secrets through his servant Phelippes, to support this trick, pretended to lean to Roman Catholicism.

Phelippes was of a grim appearance and was described by Mary herself as of "low stature, slender every way, eaten in the face with smallpox, of short sight, thirty years of age by appearance". He was, however, adroit, heartless, and extraordinarily proficient in cypher, which he could do in Latin, French, Italian, and even, a little, in Spanish. His character was not good, he was frequently in debt, and quite unscrupulous in stealing or tampering with letters. But towards his employer, Walsingham, he was meticulously faithful.

Almost as soon as Mary was installed in Chartley, this man Phelippes went to interview Sir Amias Poulet, Mary's new jailer, a stern and rigid Puritan, who was not in the least affected by Mary's graces or sufferings, who regarded her as a dangerous and probably as a wicked woman, and had no objection to lending his hand to an elaborate scheme for her destruction though he later refused, with Roman fortitude, a suggestion that he should secretly murder her and thus do Queen Elizabeth a considerable service.

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George Gifford went at the same time to Chartley under the excuse of business for his father who, as a Roman Catholic, was confined in London and who had estates near Mary's prison.

Mary, in this winter of 1585, was very severely kept. After the Protestant panic following the Papal Bann, the assassination of Orange and the discovery of abortive schemes for the murder of Elizabeth, the captive had been cut off from almost all communication from the outer world, and her household, even to the laundry-maids, was so strictly supervised that it was impossible for her to correspond with anyone.

Poulet was incorruptible, inflexible, and perpetually watchful. All he permitted her to receive in the way of news was the letters sent her by the French Ambassador which he would read first. If he did not approve of them he would not deliver them. On the other hand, he took pleasure in telling her all the bad news of her friends which he could collect, which were, as he himself admitted, "as grateful to her as salt to her eyes".

Mary had lived in this bitter seclusion for nearly a year when, on one January evening in 1586, the exasperating silence from the outer world was broken by a smuggled letter from Morgan, recommending Gifford, and another from Gifford himself offering to open up communication with her friends. Mary did not suspect a trap and was almost overwhelmed with joy at this unexpected revival of her hopes. She wrote an answer to Morgan the next day in which she testified her great pleasure in accepting his service, only warning him to be careful of the diligence of Poulet, for her sake and his own.

This letter, of course, was given by Gifford to Poulet, who in his turn handed it to Phelippe, who opened and deciphered it and sent it to Walsingham, where, after it had been re-sealed by Arthur Gregory, Walsingham's special expert in this department, it was sent on through Gifford and the French Ambassador to Paris. This elaborate proceeding took place with all the letters that Mary entrusted to Gifford. The French Ambassador, who was cautious in the first letters sent to Gifford, was reassured by Mary, who persuaded him to trust this new agent.

An intricate way of conveying the letters to Mary was thought out by Gifford or Poulet and put into execution. Letters came and went in the barrel which held the beer provided for Mary's household. They were put in a tube furnished with a cork which was slipped into the bunghole. Mary and Poulet both paid the accommodating brewer, whose name is not known but who, a strict man of business, blackmailed Poulet with the threat that he would disclose the trap for Mary and in the end sent up

the price of his beer to an extravagant figure which Poulet was, however, forced to pay.

In April 1586, Elizabeth gave a distinct warning to the French Ambassador which was curious under the circumstances and might have destroyed the whole of Walsingham's slow and ingenious plot. "M. de Châteauneuf," she said, "you have much secret intelligence with the Queen of Scots, but believe me, I know everything that is done in my kingdom, besides, since I was a prisoner in the time of the Queen my sister, I know what artifices prisoners use to gain over servants and to have secret information."

Châteauneuf treated this remark with odd indifference and did not warn Mary that Elizabeth might be cognizant of her correspondence through Gifford.

The exact date that this carefully baited trap was entered is not known, but early in 1586¹ Thomas Salisbury and Ballard, a priest who had broken prison in 1581, Antony Kerrill, another priest, also often in prison and who had become hysterical and turned informer, "a rake vainglorious and expensive", with Bernard Maud, who had been allowed out of prison to spy on the Roman Catholics, formed into some kind of a loose plot for the liberation of Mary, the rising of the Roman Catholics in England, and more vaguely still, the assassination of Elizabeth. How many of these were Walsingham's agents and how many were genuine plotters will probably never be known and is little cogent to the case.

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The man after whom this conspiracy is named, Antony Babington, was at least a genuine plotter completely unaware that the whole scheme was being engineered by Walsingham for Mary's undoing. This hapless victim of secret politics was a young gentleman of good family and considerable wealth, who had estates in Derbyshire, was married, with one child. He was a Roman Catholic, serious minded, gifted, with a turn for letters, something of a dilettante, and a philosopher possessing neither energy nor decision, weak, hesitant, and easily beguiled, the very last material out of which to make a successful conspirator and exactly the material for which Walsingham was looking. Antony Babington was also romantic, inexperienced,

¹ Mary's intercepted letter to Mendoza, then in France, following on her despair at the Scotch-English alliance of this date, and again making Philip II her heir, may have finally decided her fate.

over-confident and inspired with some genuine, if fluctuating, desire to serve his co-religionists, then so harshly treated by the Law.

He was not, as so many have asserted, in love with Mary Stewart, whom he had not probably ever seen. The story of his having been paid in Shrewsbury's employment as a page, may be a myth. In any case, there was nothing personal in Babington's plot to rescue the Queen. The nucleus of plotters, some of them Walsingham's agents, got hold of this young gentleman and involved him in their schemes. After a good deal of discussion Babington committed himself so far as to promise to raise a revolt in Derby and to agree to the assassination of Elizabeth.

Gradually he became the leader of the plot, and by the summer of 1586 there were thirteen conspirators of whom six, who remain nameless, were to be told off to assassinate Elizabeth. Babington seems to have been only half in earnest; he could not make up his mind whether to go through with the conspiracy, whether to wash his hands of it, or even whether to betray the whole thing to Walsingham.

Mary had been apprised of this plot, of which she naturally thoroughly approved; at last, when hope seemed almost extinct, here was another chance offered her. All the ambitions and desires which she had never relinquished, however much she might talk of retiring to France in a nunnery and being weary of the world, revived in her impatient heart. On the 25th of June she wrote to Babington a letter which, of course, was immediately decyphered by Phelippe, was delivered to Walsingham and probably at once put before Elizabeth, who, after considering the matter some time, ordered the plot to be allowed to continue.

Babington received and answered Mary's letter in the first week of July. His communication to the Queen of Scots was exactly what Walsingham was waiting for. Babington offered to deliver Mary, to assassinate Elizabeth, to raise forces for the Queen of Scots, and to arrange at the ports for the landing of foreign assistance. The suggestions sound like those of a lunatic but Mary, shut away from the world so long, could not have known either Babington's position or the small opportunity he had of carrying out his large promises. Here was hope and she grasped at it. Assisted by her Scotch secretary, Curle, and her French secretary, Nau, she, after much deliberation, composed the answer to Babington which was, in effect, her death warrant.

The two secretaries seemed to see nothing extraordinary in Babington's offer. It might be, they argued, that there was a crisis on in England, that Babington knew of it, that he was able to take advantage of it, that here, in brief, after so many years was the chance for which Mary had been looking ever since she landed in England, a complete reversal of affairs whereby Elizabeth would go to the bottom and she would rise to the top.

Mary had no doubts as to the wisdom and integrity of her two secretaries. The Frenchman, Claude Nau, was the brother of Jacques Nau who had formerly been in Mary's service, and who had been himself secretary to the Cardinal of Lorraine, on whose death in 1575 he received the rather dismal and dangerous post with the captive Queen. As Elizabeth approved of his appointment it has been supposed that he was in her pay, but there is no evidence for this; he was the author of the much quoted "History" of his mistress, which gives, though vaguely, her side of her debatable story.

The other secretary was Gilbert Curle, who had been with Mary for twenty years; his sister, Elizabeth, was one of Mary's most devoted attendants, and he had married another of Mary's faithful ladies-in-waiting, Barbara, daughter of John, Lord Mowbray.

Neither of these men was astute enough to suspect the trap or to see the wild folly of Babington's proposals, or if they were, they were over-ruled by the impetuous courage and unquenched spirit of Mary. She was maimed by disease, spoken of as "old" and "dying", lame from an ulcerated leg, half-paralysed from some infection in neck and arm, scarcely able to move without assistance, but neither her reckless courage nor her intense ambition had sunk. Suddenly, in the gloom of despair, a light shone and she snatched at it eagerly.

Mary, however, though so encouraged and excited by this letter, showed some caution. "If this attempt be made and fails," she remarked, "it were sufficient cause given to Elizabeth to enclose me for ever in some hold from which I should never escape, if she use me no worse, and to pursue with all extremity those that had assisted me which would grieve me more than all the unhappy that might fall upon myself."

Finally, Nau advised that the letter was left unanswered, but Mary could not bring herself to forego what seemed to the sick and despairing woman one last chance. She had no other

hope; her son had lately failed her, she knew him a pensioner of England, bound once more to the Protestant party and to Elizabeth, but there was Spain, and the English Romanists.

She passed the night, no doubt in sleepless excitement, considering Babington's offer, and by the morning she had resolved to accept this.

Babington's suggestion as to Elizabeth had read ambiguously—something was to be attempted by "the six gentlemen" against the person of the Queen, that is Elizabeth, and Mary was to offer them some reward for the exceptional danger they would risk in this service. Mary's reply, though no doubt she understood that the assassination of Elizabeth was intended, was skilful and evasive. It is somewhat strained and artificial, as her letters often were; she had the gift of using many words and committing herself to very little. But the sum total of all was that her attitude would be what it had been at the Kirk o' Field tragedy—she would stand aside and allow events to take their course. She would "look through her fingers" at the murder of Elizabeth as she had "looked through her fingers" at the murder of her husband. She would put nothing on paper to commit herself, but she would take no steps to prevent the crime from being successful. She would not give her authority to Babington to murder Elizabeth on her behalf, but would tell him to use his own discretion. Though Babington had asked her to promise heavy rewards to the six murderers, she evaded this definite request. At the same time "she will reward all those who assist her", and this may be taken as meaning assist her to escape or assist her by murdering the rival Queen.

In brief, Mary approved of Babington's offers, was grateful to him for making them, would do all her part to render them successful, and would reward all those who had helped her in this scheme.

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She must have been utterly deceived as to the position Babington held. She probably believed that he had substantial promises of Spanish help and held in his hands the main threads of a huge Roman Catholic plot to overthrow Elizabeth. It is obvious and, indeed, only natural that Mary cared little or nothing if Elizabeth lost her life in this conspiracy. She must have loathed the Queen of England, whom she considered had most bitterly wronged her, and she was not likely to be

scrupulous as to whether harm befell her from the zeal of any of her own adherents.

Roughly, the scheme to which Mary acceded seems to be this: There was to be an attempt on Elizabeth and when this was successful, word was to be sent to Chartley, the house was to be surrounded, Mary was to be rescued and carried off to some place of temporary safety until foreign forces could land to complete the rescue or the English Roman Catholics should rise in sufficient numbers to place Mary on the throne.

Though Nau had hesitated and advised that Babington's letter was not answered, Mary seems to have been quite satisfied as to the practicability of the scheme. Her instant consent to so wild a suggestion has been put down to the weakening of her powers by long imprisonment and the handicaps she was under as to her lack of knowledge of affairs in England and abroad. But, in truth, her action was the outcome of her temperament—she had always lacked knowledge of character, been sudden in her action, imprudent, reckless, and carried away by the excitement of the moment.

The ardour and energy with which she threw herself into the Babington plot is the more remarkable when her state of health at this time is considered. Her women were often up with her all night, she lost the use of her arms at times, there were "deflections in the neck" which kept her in bed for days together and some internal disease which brought her very low.

Walsingham might have spared his elaborate plot and left the Queen of Scots in peace, for it is unlikely that she would have long survived her bodily ills and her mental anguish.

Despite her sufferings, however, she had leapt eagerly at the gilded bait. The messages were dispatched, given by Gifford to Phelipps, by Phelipps decyphered and copied, and by him sent to Walsingham with the fatal mark of the double gallows on the envelope.

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Walsingham's plot had succeeded. He had in his hands sufficient evidence to bring Mary to the scaffold. But he waited a while for a few further letters to pass between his victims. Before giving orders for the arrest of the conspirators he had an interview with Babington, with whom he kept in frequent touch, and urged the young man to say all he could,

telling him he had been warned that he was a conspirator. His object probably was to get a confession from Babington without further trouble, but if this were so he was not successful. Babington did not speak, but was alarmed; he sounded the other conspirators in considerable agitation, was half minded to close the whole affair, half minded to fly the country. At the same time there was something of the fanatic about the young man and he wished to play a heroic part could he have found the courage to do so.

Robert Pooley was arrested with Ballard on the 3rd of August, upon which Antony Babington sent him this extraordinary letter :

" ROBIN,

Nor care nor cautel ever mends the broken end of a spider's thread." (In Latin.)

" I am ready to endure whatever shall be inflicted, both to do and dare is worthy of Romans." (In Latin.)

" What my course has been towards Mr. Secretary you can guess, what my love towards you yourself can best tell. The proceedings at my lodgings have been very strange, I am the same, I always pretended. I pray God you be and ever so towards me. Take heed for your own part, lest of these, my misfortunes, you bear the blame. To live among the wicked, what an exile!

" Farewell, sweet Robin, if as I take thee true to me, if not, adieu, of all two-footed things the wickedest!

" Return me thine answer for my satisfaction, and my diamond and what else thou wilt. The furnace is prepared wherein our faith must be tried. Farewell till we meet, which God knows when.

Thine, Our Father knowest,
ANTONY BABINGTON."

After writing this letter, Babington, in a ferment of agitation and excitement, decided at once to make the attempt against Elizabeth. He sought out two of the conspirators, Savage and Charnock, in Paul's Walk, and urged them to do the deed at once, giving them money and arms.

Babington was, however, all the while being closely watched by a certain Scudamore, one of Walsingham's spies. Babington was in the company of this man in a tavern when Walsingham's agent received the note which his companion by a side glance saw contained orders for his arrest. The unfortunate young man showed great presence of mind at this terrible moment.

Rising with a careless air and leaving his expensive cloak and

sword on his chair, he moved towards the bar as if to pay the account, slipped out of the tavern, and ran with desperate haste to Westminster where he met Savage and Charnock. The three men hastened to St. John's Wood and for ten days remained hidden in the forest in this district, being joined by two other conspirators, Dunn and Barnwell. At the end of this time, forced by hunger and misery, they went to Hatrow and presented themselves at the ancient moated house of Uxendon, where a Catholic family named Bellamy resided, and begged for food. Here also they received what was perhaps more important to them—the Sacraments, given them by a priest who had just escaped imprisonment.

On leaving this house the conspirators were arrested and brought to the Tower.

Two innocent victims of these intricate designs were two of the sons, Bartholomew and Jeremy, of the family who had sheltered Antony Babington. They were executed for the shelter they had given to the conspirators, and their grandmother, Catherine Page, died in prison, where she had been placed for the same offence.

Mary's secretaries and her papers were then seized, and this most unhappy woman must have realized with an unutterable pang that this last dazzling, crazy hope had been blasted. She must soon have known that it was intended for her to be blasted, too.

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She did not yield quietly when the unexpected blow fell.

Poulet had escorted her to the hunt; probably her outburst of hope had given her some strength—she was, at least, able to get on horseback, and with her was her entire retinue.

Elizabeth's messenger stopped the cavalcade, arrested Nau and Curle, and ordered the Queen to Tyxhall, a seat of Mr. Edward Haston, about three miles from Chartley.

Mary's passion broke bounds; she used violent language against Elizabeth and called upon her servants to protect her, but was forced away by Poulet who had, doubtless, Elizabeth's words ringing in his ears: "If you knew, my Amyas, how . . . my grateful heart accepts and prizes your spotless endeavours and faultless actions, your wise orders and safe regards, performed in so dangerous and crafty a charge, it would ease your troubles and rejoice your heart."

In this same letter was a sentence that may have moved

Poulet, who was truly devoted to his gallant Queen : " Bid her (Mary) ask God forgiveness for her treacherous dealings towards the saviour of her life many a year, to the intolerable peril of my own, and yet, not contented with so much forgiveness, must fault again so horribly, far passing a woman's thought, much less a Princess."

Elizabeth's probable knowledge of Walsingham's use of an *agent-provocateur* does not imply insincerity in these expressions; she believed that Mary had schemed against her life, and that she had been seduced into doing so mattered little.

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While Mary, in deep anguish, was being hurried away to Tyxhall, her papers had been seized and forwarded to London. When she heard of this she stormed afresh in her helplessness and declared that nothing could take from her the true Faith and her English blood, meaning her claim to the English throne through her descent from Henry VII.

Poulet's letters give two pathetic glimpses of this lady whom he little liked. On seeing beggars about the gate when she went abroad she wept and exclaimed in a loud voice : " I have nothing for you, I am a beggar as well as you are, all is taken from me ! " She added, with more tears : " Good God ! I am not privy to anything against the Queen."

Afterwards she tried to comfort Barbara Curle, who had been brought to bed since her husband's arrest, and, as they had been separated from the priest, she baptized the baby herself with water, giving it the name of Mary. The brothers of this baby, James and Hippolytus, both became Jesuits after the Curles had fled from England, and the latter erected a monument in the Church of St. Andrew's, Antwerp, to his mother Barbara, and his aunt, the pious Elizabeth, who did so much to keep her mistress' memory alive and sainted in the minds of Roman Catholics.

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The discovery of the Babington plot caused a profound sensation in England, as Burleigh and Walsingham had intended it should. Bells and bonfires pealing and blazing for twenty-four hours witnessed to the national relief at a national peril passed. The possibility of a Spanish invasion, of French interference on Mary's behalf, inflamed the English against the captive who had been for so long regarded as perilous in the extreme to England's safety. The events of the following year, when Philip's

galleons did sail in sight of the Devon coast, prove this alarm not to have been so illfounded.

M. de Châteauneuf endeavoured to say a word for Mary, but Elizabeth put down the whole plot to her, and would listen to no excuses. The French Ambassador had some troubles of his own, his house had to be guarded, his people were insulted in the street, and he thought he was in danger of being plundered. His protests met with the official reply : "The people are excited and cannot be restrained." To which Walsingham added, with cool irony, that "The same thing had happened in Paris the night of Saint Bartholomew". Elizabeth had an equally spirited answer when Châteauneuf made "heavy complaints" of those who had, in this crisis, spoken ill of Henri III. The Queen replied that she was sorry, but that there were perhaps a hundred thousand people who spoke ill of her in France. Châteauneuf, who had, of course, been intriguing with Mary, though he knew nothing of the Babington plot, noted with dismay the seizure of Curle and Nau, and their lodgment in Walsingham's house with a great chest of papers. He was convinced that "there can be no other intention than by some means or other to effect the ruin of the Queen of Scots".

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The miserable prisoners confessed, implicating Mary to the last degree.

On September 6th, the unhappy Nau, who had at first protested his innocence, declared before Lord Burleigh that his mistress' letters to Babington were genuine and that "I wrote them from a minute in the Queen's handwriting".

Both the secretaries admitted all the papers seized were authentic; their several interrogations before the Privy Council gave Burleigh and Walsingham all the evidence they needed against Mary.

No blame attaches to Claude Nau, who could hardly deny his own hand and cypher and who did his best for Mary, for whom, as he said in a memorial he wrote in 1605, he had spent twelve of the best years of his life, in "constant care, labour, trouble and exertion, in negotiations in almost every place in Christendom, in order that the Queen might gain her liberty, obtain possession of the King her son, and both preserve their rights to Great Britain".

He was a French subject and was convinced that he owed his life to the intervention of Henri III.

Antony Babington also confessed, with a frankness and accuracy that did not save him from an atrocious death.

In September the conspirators were tried and condemned. They suffered the hideous punishment of being quartered alive. Such was the savagery of the execution that even the populace, used as they were to appalling spectacles, was shocked, and the second batch of prisoners were put to death with more mercy.

It is unjust to blame Elizabeth for these horrors; she was among the most merciful of the Princes of Europe, ghastly as some of the executions she permitted appear to us. The savage cruelty of the age is almost incredible. During Mary's own brief reign as Queen of France the Protestants arrested after the "tumult of Amboise" were reserved for after dinner, that their execution in the courtyard might make a diversion for the ladies. And this by order of the Guises, supposed, by their friends, to be elegant, pious, charitable and humane men.

Châteauneuf did what he could for Mary—"a sovereign Princess and sister-in-law to Your Majesty"—but admitted that she was in a "wretched case". The Queen lay miserably ill, "troubled in her old manner" at Chartley, when Poulet took another step towards her destruction by the dismissal of many of her servants and the seizure of her hoard of French money. The sick woman did not give way without a painful scene, "many denials, many exclamations and other words against you (Walsingham) and railing against myself". Poulet had to bring bars to smash in the cabinet before Mary surrendered the keys. She had told, in her despair and rage, one of her useless falsehoods—that she had no money in her house and owed her servants their wages. In fact, a large sum was discovered, in Nau's chamber alone was nearly two thousand pounds.

It was, by then, only a question of under what charges Mary should be tried, what her status was, and how she might be brought under the English law. Robert Beale, Clerk to the Council, thought she could be given the rank of a peer's wife, that she was not a Queen, that she was amenable to "the laws of the Realm and not to foreign laws or men's fancies or contentions". He also argued that, even if she considered herself a prisoner of war, she had no right "to excite conspiracies".

On October 6th, Elizabeth wrote to Mary, stating that as

she had heard that the Queen of Scots denied complicity in "any attempt against our person and state" she would allow her to make her defence before "divers of our chief and ancient noblemen".

The next day Burleigh received instructions from his mistress for this trial of the Queen of Scots which contained provisos favourable to the prisoner.

The Chief of the Commissioners or Judges of Mary was the Lord Chancellor Bromley; he was assisted by the Earls of Oxford, Shrewsbury, Mary's keeper for so long, Kent, Pembroke, Lincoln, Derby, Rutland, Worcester, Northumberland, and that Earl of Warwick, Leicester's brother, who had once been rejected with contempt by Maitland of Lethington as a candidate for Mary's hand.

The Earl of Leicester was not among Mary's judges; he had long since relinquished his golden hopes of a Crown Matrimonial, and since his name had been bandied about Europe as a possible husband for Mary or Elizabeth had married twice—secretly, Lady Sheffield, and publicly, Lettice, the widowed Countess of Essex and mother of the man who was to take Robert Dudley's place in the regard of the English Queen.

There was also Burleigh, the Lord Treasurer, several knights, including Walsingham, the Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench, and the Lords Chief Justices of the Common Pleas, beside numerous judges, doctors of law, notaries, and men of law. The farce was gravely and splendidly staged.

Mary was denied counsel. At first she had refused to acknowledge the authority of the Commissioners, and to appear before them in what she must have known was to be a prelude to her death.

Burleigh at least was not moved to any pity of the sick, helpless, cornered woman; he wrote to Secretary Davison: "Mary has denied the accusations. Her intention was to move pity by long artificial speeches, to lay all blame on the Queen's Majesty, etc. And in these speeches I did so encounter her with reasons, out of my knowledge and experience, as she had not the advantage that she looked for. And I am assured that the auditory did find her case not pitiable, and her allegations untrue."

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Although the death of Mary may well be termed judicial

murder, she was tried under a law that, though ferocious, was valid in her case. Admitting that she had resigned her crown and was under English jurisdiction, she had committed, by the Babington letters, a crime the legal punishment of which was death. Even if she had not interfered with the plot, she was, under the "Statute of Silence", guilty of treason as the person in whose favour a plot had been made.

On the other hand, she herself maintained that she was a sovereign Queen, liable to no laws and not subject to the power of England where she was unwilling to be detained. She was at length induced to appear before Elizabeth's "ancient nobility" and, heavily disabled by disease, walked slowly into the Hall, leaning on her doctor's arm.

When she entered, clad in her stately mourning, the great chamber filled with the formidable presences of Elizabeth's Commissioners, she must have known that it was the end. She was, of course, given no chance, but she defended herself with spirit, dignity and grace before this tribunal which she had at first refused to recognize. Sick, heartbroken, without legal aid or companionship, she defended herself step by step against the inevitable doom which had been prepared for her; she employed her usual weapons—complete denial of all charges brought against her, vehement protestations of her innocence, insistence on her Sovereign rights. She had never plotted against the life of Elizabeth and she, a free princess, was at liberty to take what means she chose for her own escape from illegal detention.

At first she denied scornfully all correspondence with Babington, but admitted this when confronted with the depositions of Nau and Curle, copies of her letters to Babington, and his to her. She spoke hotly and bitterly, with many angry expressions, she resented the empty throne and canopy set to represent Elizabeth and the fact that she had no chair of state. She said she had a right to sit under a canopy since she had been married to a King of France—it was a profound grievance with her that the canopy in her state apartment had lately been taken down. She declared that she was a Queen and recognized no superior on earth, and would answer no one but Elizabeth herself.

Seeing so many lawyers she remarked bitterly: "I see ye have many lords and counsels but none for me."

On being shown some of the letters that were evidence

against her, she said hotly: "Here are sevral of my enemies present who have brewed this for me." This was truer than she knew; probably she was never quite aware that she died a victim of Walsingham's intrigues, though she seems to have sensed some double-dealing. She "blubbered a good deal" from fatigue and despair.

Burleigh, who had been for so many years the Queen of Scots' enemy, was not moved to compassion by this forlorn figure in mourning, by this bereft woman who defended her hopeless cause with such spirit and courage.

Amias Poulet, writing to Walsingham on the 24th of October while this trial was in progress, gives the following extraordinary picture of his prisoner: "I see no change in Queen Mary from her former quietness and security. She is careful to have her chamber put in good order, desirous to have divers things provided for her own necessary use. She is expecting to have her moncy shortly rendered unto her. She takes pleasure in trifling lies and in the whole course of her speech is free from grief of mind in outward appearance. After some unimportant conversation she said to me that the histories make mention that this realm was used to blood. I answered that if she would peruse the chronicles of Scotland, France, Spain, and Italy, she would find that this realm was far behind any other Christian nation in shedding of blood, although the same was also very necessary when danger and offence did rise. She was not willing to wage further in this matter, and indeed it was easy to see she had no meaning in this speech to lead to her own case, but did utter it by way of discourse after her wonted manner. She is utterly free of all fear of harm."

At the end of October, Mary was ill and her jailer wrote: "I deny that I have any time left the lady in her passionate speeches, but I confess I have often left her in her superfluous and idle speeches."

Mary's serenity was the result more of courage than of indifference, and this is proved by a letter that she wrote to her cousin, the Duke of Guise, on Christmas Day of this, the last year of her life. It is like most of her letters, irreproachable in tone and sentiment, touched with dignity and pathos. She was about to be put to death, she declared, by an unjust sentence "such as no person of her race and quality had ever yet suffered". She thanked her God that she was dying "for the maintenance and restoration of the Catholic Church in this

unhappy island"—and that she, a free Queen, was being done to death by heretics, who had no jurisdiction over her (all the members of her House had been persecuted by heretics), and there was no shame attached to the fate that she was about to suffer at their hands.

She reminds her cousin of the assassination of his father, who had fallen by the hands of a Protestant at the siege of Orleans. Pride and a hard arrogance shows under the formal resignation of these words.

But in the next sentence Mary is tender. She begs that her cousin will pay her debts, look after her poor servants, found some annual Mass for her soul, but not at his expense. She speaks of her last tragedy, begs that God will bless him, his wife, children, and cousin, a blessing that she would pray God to give her children, but she has only one son "who is unhappy and deceived". She is sending him some little tokens to "remind him to pray for her and one will deliver to him a ruby ring in her name, and this person he is to credit". She says she has suffered much in the last two years and returns to her vows of passionate fidelity to the Church. She was born, she says, to offer her blood in the cause of her Faith.

But after this protestation of the martyr, worldly rage and pride again asserts itself: "With a view to humble me they have ordered a canopy to be removed and since then my keeper has come to offer to write to the Queen, saying that it has not been done by her command but by the advice of councillors. I showed them instead of my arms on the canopy the Cross of my Redeemer; they are being more mild since that time."

The consolation of feeling herself a victim of her fidelity to the Church of Rome and the arrogance of birth was all that was now left to Mary in her last desolation. This spiritual dignity and worldly pride supplied her with a remarkable fortitude.

Her judges found her guilty of complicity in a conspiracy against the life of Elizabeth: "Finding her not only accessory and privy to the conspiracy, but also an imaginer and compasser of Her Majesty's destruction," wrote Walsingham in triumph of the verdict of the Commissioners, met finally in the Star Chamber. The two Houses of Parliament confirmed this judgment. At the news that England would soon be rid of the Queen of Scots, great public joy was manifest.



Henri III and James VI intervened for the Queen of Scotland. James' position was cruel, he knew that he, a pensioner of Elizabeth and, as he hoped, her heir, could do nothing to offend her, and he privately acquiesced in the murder of his mother in return for the material benefits he enjoyed from England and the prospects of becoming Elizabeth's successor. He saved his face by a public protest, which the English Government knew they were not to take seriously. He declared that he had a natural affection for his mother, but did not like her behaviour, and he dwelt with gloomy foreboding on her strange, unhappy story.

Nor did the protests of Henri III mean much. As Elizabeth took no heed of them he neither could nor would do anything. Elizabeth told Châteauneuf that she could not resist the demands of the Parliament. It was her life or Mary's "and the King of France cannot think it reasonable that I who am innocent should die that the guilty Queen of Scotland be saved".

Châteauneuf wrote to Henri III that he had seen bonfires lit in London streets and heard the joy-bells ringing for twenty-four hours when public proclamation had been made in London that "Mary was a traitress, unworthy of succeeding to the throne and guilty of death". In the same letter the Ambassador shows some pity for Mary: "But it is a wretched situation of great danger in which the Queen of Scotland now finds herself. From herself we have no news as she is very strictly watched. They have left her only four women and two servants. Sentence of death was announced to her in the presence of Lord Buckhurst; we have not heard that she said anything else than that she did not believe the Queen her sister would deal inhumanly with her.

"About the time of the public proclamation they removed the canopy from her chamber, hung the walls and bed with black and sent a clergyman to console her. She has, however, refused to admit him, and declares that whatever may happen she will die a Catholic."

On the 19th of December Mary wrote her last letter to Elizabeth. This remarkable epistle, which is in French, shows a most uncommon resolution on Mary's part, and it must have required a rare force of character to write with such control and such rare dignity under circumstances so atrocious—dignity and self-control that Mary had not shown in many another crisis of her life where such qualities would have been so valuable.

Like other members of her unhappy House she knew how to die better than she knew how to live.

Her last request to Elizabeth was that her body might be taken to France and lie beside that of the Queen her mother : " Considering that in Scotland the bodies of the Kings my predecessors have been insulted and the Churches pulled down and profaned, and that suffering in this country I cannot have a place with your ancestors who are also mine. And beside, according to our religion we consider it important to be buried in holy ground. I do not in any way blame you before God, but take heed after my death lest you see the truth in all things, A jewel which I received from you I will send you in my last words, or rather if you please, I will again request you in the name of Jesus, in consideration of our consanguinity, for the sake of Henry VII your ancestor and mine and for the honour of the dignity which we both hold and for our common sex that my petition may be granted. For the rest, I think you will have learned that my canopy has been taken down in your name, though I was afterwards told it was not by your commands but by the direction of some Privy Councillors. I praise God for this cruelty, which serves only to exercise malice and mortify me after my death has been resolved upon."

The draft of Mary's death warrant was signed on the 1st of February. It is in the handwriting of Burleigh. On the 15th of February, Beale, Clerk to the Council, was sent from London to Fotherinhay to prepare for the execution of the Queen of Scots. Shrewsbury and other nobles were ordered to be present.

It was Beale who, late at night, was admitted into the presence of Mary and who informed her that she was to be beheaded the next morning at ten of the clock.

Mary received this brutal announcement with calm dignity. She seemed indifferent as to her fate, and perhaps was so, being drugged by despair. She declared that she was glad to come to the end of nineteen years of misery and misfortune, but that her spirit was innocent, her heart pure, her conscience clean, and she could tread boldly into the presence of God. She said she was guiltless of the crimes they laid to her charge. She spoke again of her violent death and her unjust sentence pronounced by men who had no power over her. And deviating something from the tone of her last letter to Elizabeth, she spoke of that Queen's deadly hatred from which she had never expected

anything but death. She said also, and this was true enough, that Elizabeth's counsellors were also her "old enemies" whom the Queen of England had employed to bring about her destruction and death.

She then endeavoured to turn her mind from these exasperating worldly vexations and prayed with her faithful women till one o'clock in the morning.

Those with whom she had lived in such intimacy for so long greatly loved her. In the eyes of some of her attendants she was both saint and martyr.

She had with her the two Curles, Elizabeth and Barbara, Joan Kennedy, Christian Hogg, "Bastien's wife", the bride of the Kirk o' Field night, Mary Page, Susan Kirkcaldy and a French lady by the name of Renée la Beauregard; the faithful Mary Seton, who had been so clever with periwigs, had, broken in health, left for a Flemish convent some years before. There was also in her establishment an apothecary, a surgeon, a priest, a physician, and several men servants.

Among these she divided her exquisite treasures, objects which she had cherished long, and must have often handled during her captivity. It must have taken her a great many minutes of her last hours to have patiently divided these little remembrances among her few friends. Sir Robert Melville had a little picture of James VI, and Andrew Melville was charged with a handsome bed furniture, probably Mary's own work, a piece of precious unicorn's horn, a cloth of estate, and some pictures of the Queen's ancestors (Stewart or Guise?), to be delivered to her son; that Prince must have received the piteous bequest with some uneasiness.

There were considerable sums of money, French crowns and Rose nobles to be divided among these servants and the poor, and, left in possession of the women, more charming feminine trifles to fetch a sigh from any heart, a chain of coral and musk, "a little gold bodkin to stick in a woman's hair with a white sapphire at the end, a little heart of silver, a little gilt bottle of sweet water, . . ."

Was the blood-red ring with which Henry Stewart had married her, the black ring with the tears which she had designed for Bothwell, amongst these mementos which she gave away the night before her death? She did not mention either of these names; she had not wished to be buried beside Henry Stewart in the royal vaults of Holyrood, but far away, where, if she had

not been happy, she had been at least at peace. Nor did she speak of Rizzio; it is said that she bore Norfolk's diamond in her bosom to the last, but surely of all her lovers it was not of this man she thought.

She remained inscrutable amid her gracious legacies; there was no reference to her marriages, to her lovers, to her imputed crimes; she did not take this last chance to explain herself, to clear herself, to leave finally on record her explanation of much that had been blackly obscure, her justification of much that had been so damnable. She let it all go. Perhaps she was too tired for mere words, too weary to endure even the echo of passion. She slept a little and prayed.

She was not wholly resigned; during her last night some bitter words escaped her against the son who had deserted her. It had scarcely seemed possible to her that she, of such birth and such high endowments, should come to this atrocious desolation. Perhaps she recalled that everyone who had had a hand in the death of King Henry had come to a violent end. Moray, Maitland, Bothwell, Morton, Paris . . . many another.

The mind pauses, fascinated before the spectacle of this woman at this moment. The conventional manner, "port after stormy seas, rest after long pain," will not suffice as the dirge for this Queen.

She was so violently stayed in the sudden flare up of hopes that had never been quenched, she was so far from wishing for the final peace, she was so much of the earth, so passionately worldly. In the ruined, tormented body there beat a heart so bold, the feeble limbs were animated by a soul so ardent that her talk of desire for death was but a palliative she used to soothe aching nerves. Of what could her thoughts have been as she made out the list of her treasures for her distraught servants? Did she think of all those others who had died miserably, not only her lovers, but her friends and enemies—Moray, Maitland, Lennox, Mar, Argyll, Morton, Kirkcaldy of Grange, Archbishop Hamilton, Paris and George Dalgleish, other underlings tortured and slain?

Did she recall Edinburgh where she had laughed and feasted, ridden in state, crowned, where she had shrieked at the Provost's window, half-naked, discrowned? "That high-seated city, in a fruitful soil and wholesome air, adorned with many noblemen's towers laying about it and abounding with many springs of sweet water" where she had danced with Chastelard, heard

Rizzio sing, watched Henry Stewart tilt at the ring, ridden abroad with Earl Bothwell.

Perhaps her mind was at pause and she remembered none of these things, being only concerned with the manner of her dying. But she must, as did another brilliant woman at the point of sudden death, have "regretted herself". She had been so lovely, so gay, so fine, so high-born, a joy to the senses of the beholder, and she had been so marred, wasted, and cast aside. She remained enclosed with her farewells, her trinkets, her prayers, her elegant preparations of bathing, coiffing, attiring herself in silk, velvet, lawn and lace; there was no disorder, and in the morning she was ready.

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Her demeanour gave a distinction to the sordid tragedy of the last scene which redeems it from utmost horror, yet at the same time makes it near unbearable. She, limping between two of her gentlemen, entered the Hall in Fotherinhay where a large fire dispersed the rigours of the January morning, and a dais eight feet high had been erected, hung with black cloth, set with chair, block, and axe. The chamber was full of grave men, intent upon their duties, and of keen reporters anxious to note every detail of this uncommon scene.

Her part, at least, was put through with grace and elegance. All about her was rich and exquisite as she had ever been used to have it, and not without a certain pageantry. Her robes were splendid, her attire was precise, and the smooth face between the rich chestnut curls of the periwig and the wings of the lace cap was serene.

One reporter noted her as tall, corpulent, flat-faced and round-shouldered. Another testified to her extraordinary charm, "the most beautiful princess of her time".

There was an air of sombre ceremonial about the scene. Did any of those with her think of other pageants of her life, of the days when she had ridden robed and crowned through the streets of Edinburgh to open the Parliament, of the masques in Holyrood where she had laughed and glittered in male attire, of those mad hours of revelry when she and her maids, their costly kirtles tucked up, had run about the streets collecting money for the sumptuous banquets, of those days of high-hearted and gorgeous merriment when the music that had satisfied her ancestors had not been enough for her, of that "High Mass at Easter of the Resurrection" when the common

music of the organ was not sufficient and that she must have trumpets, drums, fifes, bagpipes and sakirs?

But there was no music in Fotherinhay; she had to rely solely on her two inner strengths—her hopes of Heaven and her pride. She had been refused a priest of her own Faith and had borne this unnecessary cruelty with fortitude. Without petulance she rejected the officious Dean of Peterborough, who offered her, with mistaken zeal, the consolations of the Protestant religion.

She had wept a little during her trial, and she shed a few tears again while the prayers were being said at the side of the block. But she maintained an admirable control over her nerves. She forgave her enemies, she was sorry for her sins, she trusted in God. She begged that her women might remain with her and answered for their control; she took affectionate leave of Robert Melville and charged him to take a message to the son whom she would not have recognized had she seen him. James VI was to live a Catholic, at peace with Elizabeth and in fear of God.

She demanded a safe conduct for her servants and that they might have their legacies; this was promised. She mounted the dais and sank into the chair, being too lame to stand alone. She listened fearlessly while Robert Beale read over her sentence and Elizabeth's warrant, from which hung the great seal of England. A Cross of ivory and a missal was in her hand, on her bosom a crucifix in gold, at her girdle a rosary.

Kneeling down before the block she prayed to herself, "with great courage did not change colour and gave no sign of fear". She behaved with gentle dignity and kindness to all about her, even to those who had been her warders and her enemies. She had offered Sir William FitzWilliam, governor of Fotherinhay, "the last gift of a poor captive, the picture of her son which she was wont to have above her bed, if he cared to take it".

This was an exquisite courtesy towards one whom she had only known as a jailer.

Her eyes were bound up with a delicate chalice veil of fine cambric, embroidered with gold, perhaps her own work. She stated clearly her creed: "I believe firmly to be saved by the passion and blood of Jesus Christ, and wherein also I believe according to the faith of the ancient Catholic Church of

Rome, and therefore I shed my blood." She repeated the Seventieth Psalm "then one of the executioners held her hands and the other cut off her head with two strokes of the chopper".

All was done with such grace and dignity that none there present could have believed that this had ever been a voluptuous, a high-spirited, a wanton woman.

When the axe had fallen, when the head was divided from the body, the veils and coifs and periwigs fell off and the visage which had seemed that of a beautiful woman appeared that of an old, stricken creature with close-shaven grey poll. This the executioner showed to the people with the cry: "God save our Queen of England."

The proceedings were marked by great solemnity; while the headless body was taken away to the surgeon, every scrap of material on which blood had fallen was burned, the gates of the Castle were locked, there was no excitement or tumult. A little dog was found near the severed head; he was carefully washed; all the draperies, raiment and planks were destroyed, partly out of reverence "for she was a King's daughter", partly that there might be no hoarding up of relics.

Henry Talbot, son of the Earl of Shrewsbury, was sent with the tidings to London, where his news caused much rejoicing, as if "the populace believed that a new era had begun in which they hope all will remain at peace".

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Her embalmed body lay six months unburied and then, in denial of her last and passionate request, was laid with great state and reverence in Peterborough Cathedral, the gentlemen who bore it finding the weight of the leaden coffin so unsupportable that they placed it directly in the vault that had been prepared for it opposite the tomb of another wretched Queen, the Spanish Catherine, first wife of Henry VIII, instead of bearing "it in the solemnity". It was "besides feared that the solder might rip and, being very hot weather, cause some inconvenience". This pageant took place by torchlight on the night of July 30th, 1587.

When James VI had obtained that English Crown, the right to which he had inherited from his mother and because of which he had abandoned her, he caused her body to be moved from Peterborough, but not to the French soil and

Catholic church where she had desired to rest, but near Elizabeth Tudor in St. Peter's Church at Westminster. There she was borne in final splendour, again by torchlight, on the 8th of October, 1609, being attended by great dignitaries of state and English nobles and Bishops and Deans and Clergy of the Protestant Faith that she had so disdained and rejected. James paid handsomely for a noble monument which showed his mother robed and crowned, lying for centuries stately and serene on the south side of the Chapel Royal at Westminster.

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While the news of the death of the Queen of Scots was received by the Protestants with outbursts of joy, as if the land had passed to a great deliverance, to the Roman Catholics it was the passing of a saint and martyr. Her long imprisonment and her heroic death had purged her, in the eyes of her co-religionists, of any guilt or folly. She was to them and would remain what she had declared herself to be, "one who had perished for her Faith".

Sir Amias Poulet took with scrupulous honesty an inventory of all Queen Mary's possessions, which he sent to Sir Francis Walsingham. Among them was a little gun with wheels, seemingly of gold, a little bow and arrows of gold, and a little table of gold enamelled, containing the picture of the King of Scots, evidently the gifts for her son that he had not been allowed to receive.

Among her bequests was one to the infant child of Gilbert Curle—a little bear enamelled white, with two small rings, one of them with five small opals, and a tiny chain of coral and mother-of-pearl.

To Sebastien and Sebastien's wife, groom and bride at those nuptials to attend which Mary had left Kirk o' Field the night of the King's murder, was a jewel of gold set with four pearls and three other stones with a blue sapphire in the middle, a little bird of gold enamelled green, a pair of perfumed bracelets intermixed with silk. In the list was the ruby tortoise, Rizzio's gift.

She also left several pieces of elaborate embroidery "unfinished with sewing silk and raw silk of all colours not yet wound". Even so was her life, many coloured, richly designed, unfinished, with many threads unwound.

From the Scotland that, as Mary's background, has seemed a shambles lit by the candles of a riotous feast where wantons

ply their trade, comes this lovely voice, one among many voices of peace and hope issuing from the heart of this great people. It is that of a man who was in the service of Mary's son and who died the year that her body was transferred to Westminster
—Alexander Hume of Logie :

“The time so tranquil is and still
That nowhere shall ye find
Save on high and barren hill
An air of passing wind.

The Dove with whistling wings so blue
The winds can fast collect,
Her purple pens turn many a hue
Against the sun direct.

What pleasure then to walk and see
Endlong a river clear,
The perfect form of every tree
Within the deep appear.

Oh, then, it were a seemly thing
While all is still and calm,
The praise of God to sing and play,
With cornet and with shalm.”

* * * * *

In the Church of Notre Dame in France where twenty-eight years before Mary Stewart had been married to the youth whom she must have remembered every time she signed herself “Dowager-Queen of France”, and whose picture had been in her possession when she died, the Archbishop of Bourges preached her funeral oration before a splendid company, including her brother-in-law, King Henri III.

“Many of us saw in the place where we are now assembled to deplore her, the Queen on the day of her bridals, so covered with jewels that the sun himself shone not more brightly, so beautiful, so charming in all as never woman was. The walls were then hung with cloth of gold and precious tapestry, every space was filled with thrones and seats, crowded with princes and princesses who came from all parts to share in the rejoicing. The palace was overflowing with magnificence, fêtes and masques, the streets with tourney.

“A little time, and it has all vanished like a cloud. The

marble, the bronze and the iron are decomposed in the air or corroded by dust, but the remembrance of her brightness shall live eternally."

" Yet of thy beauty must I question make,
Seeing thou art lost in wastes of time."

NOTES

Page 372, last 2 lines. " De Maria Scotorum Regina " is not to be confused with the famous pamphlet " De Detectio ", for which Buchanan received a pension from Elizabeth and which was widely used as a political weapon in Europe.

Page 386, line 21. Sir William Cecil was created Earl of Burleigh in 1571.

Page 410, 7th line from bottom. Henri, third Duke of Guise (Balafré), assassinated with his brother Louis, Cardinal of Guise, at Blois by order of Henri III, 1588.

POSTLUDE

THE doom of Mary Stewart lay in herself—no one could have saved her from the consequences of her own reckless passions. A deep and impartial study of her character reveals no mysterious heroine of romance, no mystic delicate creature sighing after the unattainable felicity of an ideal love.

She was of her own times, eager to take part in all the pleasures and enjoy all the privileges of her extraordinary position as a Queen Regnant—one which only a few women, since history was first recorded, have held.

She has often been represented as a woman searching piteously for love and vilely betrayed by love's counterfeit. There is no trace of this nor much of heroic love itself in her story. Her passion for Henry Darnley and her infatuation for the Earl Bothwell were almost entirely physical, redeemed, perhaps, by some touch of higher feelings, though this is rendered doubtful by her consent to Darnley's death and her suit for a divorce from Bothwell when her circumstances rendered it useful for her to marry another man. It may be argued that both these men behaved in such a manner as to change her love to hatred, but

“Love is not love that alteration finds
Nor seeks with the remover to remove——”

It was a violent, lustful age, the aristocracy was insolently immoral, the life of Courts openly corrupt, and it would have been remarkable if Mary Stewart had been capable of an idyllic, true, and faithful affection for any man. Nothing is clearer than that she was not. Her defenders, who all serve their hearts at the expense of their heads, blacken the men who suffered through her choice in order to exalt her—to make her appear deeply wronged all who came in contact with her must be painted as scoundrels. A study of the facts does not

support this view. Her second husband especially seems to have been maligned. She chose him, exalted him, flattered him to excess, then behaved in such a fashion as would have driven an older, wiser man to frenzy. There is no reason to believe that he knew he lied when he accused her of being the lover of a servant, and according to the standards of his time, he was, holding this belief, justified in taking the bloody revenge he did take.

She lured him to betray his accomplices, not in itself an honourable act though one that might have been excused had she founded a sincere reconciliation upon it. She did not, but, even after the ugly episode of Rizzio, took Earl Bothwell into conspicuous favour, again estranged herself from her husband, and only made a friendly gesture towards him when she was desirous of delivering him to his enemies.

Her third husband was, without question, a murderer—"a lewd man, blinded by ambition"—but while he pleased her she was willing to overlook his crimes, though all Europe warned her against him, and to join him in a union so scandalous that even her friends were utterly dismayed.

Allowing (and it is extremely difficult to do so) that Mary was in the end the victim of Bothwell's violence, she had herself, knowing what he was, set him up, encouraged him, accorded him favour after favour. He was no worse than many of his contemporaries, and savours more of an Italian or "Italianate" of the Renaissance than of the Border ruffian that he is so often depicted as being. Could Mary have found "all for love and the world well lost" with Bothwell her story would have had an heroic cast, but, despite her frantic protestations of devotion towards this, her third husband, less than a year after their last parting, she was playing with the thought of another marriage, beguiling George Douglas, and as soon as her prison was changed and the Norfolk marriage offered another hope, she tried to free herself of her distant husband and eagerly betrothed herself to one who could scarcely have stirred either affection, passion, or fancy, thus making Bothwell, as was contemptuously said, "her fornicator" not her legal lord.

"Foul of face" one of her servants described the Duke of Norfolk, and his portrait confirms this judgment, but Mary could write him warm love letters, exchange tokens, betroth herself to him, plot with him against her enemies, re-act the

story of herself and Bothwell with this other heretic. There is no hint that she gave any sigh for the prisoner in Denmark, nor any word of compassion, of regret for his fate, so much harsher than her own. She had ruined him as he had ruined her, and there is no evidence that she was of finer nature than he was although they were, in much, similar.

He cared little for her and only used her for his ill-judged ambition; she cared little for him once his splendid presence had gone from her sight. She was, throughout her life, self-centred, absorbed in her own person and circumstances, entranced by her own high spirits, upheld by her buoyant pride that was so intense that she could be "familiar to all".

In her early womanhood she was full of the material joys of existence, ready for any excitement, any pleasure, kind and gracious to those about her, as long as they did not try to check her headlong wishes and whims, eager to please and be pleased. After her misfortunes had darkened down on her so early she was entirely preoccupied by her miseries, dwelt perpetually on her wrongs and sufferings, and struggled with unabated pride and energy to regain the dangerous throne that she had lost so soon.

She was graciously sorry for the underlings who had suffered from their fidelity to her fallen estate, but she had no pity for those of her own caste who had lost all for her, and she accepted no iota of blame for their misfortunes. During the nineteen years of her imprisonment her lamentations against her bitter fate were continuous, but any stinging reflections that some of her woes might result from her faults never troubled her self-complacency. The dark cloud on that honour which was "dearer to her than life" she did not seriously attempt to raise. She never said anything definite to clear herself of complicity in her husband's murder nor gave any explanation of the Bothwell marriage; her protestations of innocence were emphatic but general. She evaded always any direct answer to any direct charge.

In 1582, when Elizabeth's Commissioners once again taxed her with the murder, she asked to have the charges in writing when in writing she would reply. She read Buchanan's "Detectio" and found in it "the lewd work of an atheist", but she did not refute the accusations therein. Many of these are careless lies; why did not Mary say so, unless she was afraid that by exposing Buchanan's falsehoods she would reveal the

basic truths on which they rested? She had ample time in her English prisons and two secretaries usually at her command. Why did she not set out an exact relation of her behaviour and circumstances while in Scotland and cite those who could bear witness to her depositions? The truth always has, even against the most ingenious of slanders, considerable weight, and Mary declared herself anxious for the approbation of posterity—what could have prevented her from thus stating her case in all the frankness of innocence?

Claude Nau's "Memorials of Mary Stewart" she is supposed to have supervised and approved, but these are slight, inconclusive, often vague, full of vital omissions, and beg the question of Mary's private conduct.

She denied writing the "casket letters", but gave no evidence to prove this denial. When Elizabeth's Commissioners, Lord Shrewsbury and Secretary Beale (1573), accused her of complicity in the Northumberland revolt she utterly denied it, but when faced with some of her own intercepted letters, wept and accused her steward of adding something to her cyphers. She pleaded that considering her sufferings and her excitement her words should not be taken too literally.

She also repudiated the famous letter to Babington that was the final excuse for her death. She undoubtedly wrote this in the sense that she dictated it and approved it in its final form.

She declared frequently that all the Princes of Christendom recognized her "innocence", but this was not true. She had no friend left in Europe after her marriage to Earl Bothwell, and though the Valois family interceded for her it was for form's sake because of her position as Queen Dowager of France; had she fled to their protection they would have had nothing to offer her but the refuge of a convent. Her own relatives, the Guises, to whom she appealed so frantically, not only made no effort to help her, but did not put on record their approbation of her conduct nor their conviction of her unblemished honour.

Her confessor left her and the Pope abandoned her; if afterwards the Vatican took up her cause it was entirely through policy—it was not a question of the innocence or guilt of the Queen of Scots but that of using her to help in the counter-Reformation which might unseat Elizabeth Tudor, the bastard excommunicated heretic. The same motives animated Philip II

—when he decided finally to risk a descent on England (1588) it was too late to hope to champion Mary Stewart, who had been for more than a year in her grave.

The character of the Earl of Moray has been severely attacked by his half-sister's champions; they accept her view that his ambition caused him to intrigue steadily for her downfall. This opinion need not, on the evidence, be accepted. Moray may have been as willing to rule through Mary as he was willing to rule through her son, his desire for aggrandizement may have been satisfied by the position of first adviser to the Crown.

He was a very able, prudent man and it seems fair to infer that he was loyal to Mary until her marriage, and would have been so afterwards had he approved of her husband. There were many stains on his own character, but he always preserved an outward decorum and he possessed great dignity and pride, both of which were wounded by the scandals to which Mary's conduct gave rise. He undoubtedly saved her life when he returned to Scotland in 1567 and probably acted in her interests in keeping her in Lochleven.

It may be reasonably supposed that Moray was Mary's good genius and that she alienated him by a marriage of which he could not approve, she being taken by the mere "fantasy of a man, without regard to his tastes, manners, or estate" (Randolph).

Sir William Maitland of Lethington remains an enigma. He was so subtle, so used to intrigue, so fond of secret, difficult policies that he has left behind him a character disguised to posterity. It is probable that his position was that of Moray—he served Mary till the influence of other men estranged him. He was not, however, like the austere Moray, disgusted by her frailties, but despaired of her as a Queen. He had, perhaps at first, more chivalrous devotion for her than any other of her councillors. Their minds were alike in many things.

No good has ever been said of the Earl of Morton, but his villainies have not much to do with Mary's story.

Most of the other nobles who pressed about the Queen—"the Lords" were scoundrels, she knew and accepted this, and cared nothing as long as they supported her; not one of them knew nicety, loyalty, honour, mercy—nor, indeed, any virtue. They were, most of them, "art and part" in the murder of Darnley; the fastidious Lethington and the sincerely pious Moray

were probably accomplices in this crime—Bothwell was the tool in the hands of more cunning men.

The behaviour of the Lords towards Mary was without scruple; they changed their attitude towards her as it suited them, they charged her with a crime that was also their crime, they circulated libels against her, and, in the case of the "confessions" of the underlings executed for the Kirk o' Field murder, they falsified evidence against her with utter disregard of truth. None of this proves her innocence. The "confessions" were tampered with, not so much because this was necessary to incriminate the Queen and Bothwell, as because it was necessary to exculpate the Lords.

As to the "casket letters", they were obviously capable of forging them as far as the morality of the matter went, though it is dubious if any besides Lethington had the skill to so creep into Mary's mind as to be able to write Letter II. But did they require to go to this trouble? If they were capable of forging them, Mary was capable of writing them. And so exactly do they fit into her life and character, into the circumstances and the period that it seems fantastically romantical to suppose that she did not write them. Until it can be *proved* that she did not, it must remain a very likely supposition that she did. We may, indeed, if we chose, take every document to Mary's discredit to be a forgery, every account that is against her to be written in malice, every tale that blackens her to be false. In brief, we may reject as spurious every tittle of evidence that does not fit in with the motion of wronged innocence. If we do not do this we must allow her to have been very much the woman that her enemies declared her to be, wilful, passionate, headstrong, false and light.

While on this vital question of evidence we must remind ourselves that we cannot reject all that is against Mary and accept all that is for her; if we disbelieve the Lennox MSS., the reports of the English envoys, Moray, Lethington, Du Croc, the "confessions" of Hay of Tala, Paris, etc., we must also disbelieve Nau and the praises of Brantôme and Ronsard and all the scattered references to Mary's princely qualities, to her wit, grace, courage, and beauty.

We must also remember that if she was of untarnished honour, chaste, true, and single-minded, all such panegyrics on her judgment and wisdom are manifestly false—she must have been, if innocent in all the dubious acts of her life, a

passive fool who was completely overwhelmed by every stronger character with whom she came in contact. We cannot credit both her "piercing judgment", her precocious understanding and cleverness, and her honest sincerity. She was, for instance, either cunning or simple when she signed away the liberties of Scotland secretly on her marriage to François de Valois—she could not, on this occasion, have been both wise and honest and this applies to many other actions of her life.

Her behaviour during her brief reign, which was an episode that hardly affected the history of Scotland, proves that she had neither political ability nor patriotism. She was avid to rule and impatient of any restriction on her power, but she was incapable of governing, and of her people as a separate entity she had no thought at all. Acting at first under the advice of the Guises and then under that of Moray she tried to conciliate the Protestants, even to the point of sacrificing her own champions and co-religionists, the Gordons, and, for the sake of maintaining herself in Scotland was willing to sanction attacks on her own Faith. She employed heretics, she took the advice of one in Moray, she married one in Bothwell, she betrothed herself to another in Norfolk, and while firmly adhering to her own tenets she was content to place them in the background for the sake of power.

It does not anywhere appear that Mary's religion was more than an ornate superstition, though probably she was self-deceived, on this point, as to her own sincerity. During her imprisonment and as her misfortunes thickened she turned to her Faith as a child in the dark turns to a glimmer of light. Divorced from power and state by her abdication and flight, debarred from love and gaiety by her forced seclusion and her increasing complication of diseases, she gradually developed the religious pose that provided an emotional outlet and was, politically, most useful. Rejected by man she could appeal to God, condemned by the world she could seek for justice in Heaven, a Catholic in the hands of the Protestants she could claim compassion as a martyr. Only by such an attitude could she, stripped of all she had valued, find consolation.

From a worldly point of view it was also entirely to her interest to emphasize her religion; her sole hope of foreign aid and of an English revolt in her favour lay in her position as a Roman Catholic only debarred by her Faith from the English Throne. Everyone, from the Pope to Antony

Babington, who dabbled in plots to release Mary, did so in the hope of restoring the ancient Faith. Mary's pity brought her neither peace nor resignation nor any disdain of the world. Though she declared repeatedly that she would renounce all ambition even severe illness could not check her restless worldliness, her thirst for power and revenge. She clutched eagerly at the frantic hope held out by Babington, and even at the very last her laments for her robbed canopy, the symbol of royalty, mingle pathetically with her pious reflections, her hopes of Heaven, her confidence in the righteousness of her cause.

Mary's violent death was the most fortunate event that ever happened to her; it purged her of old scandals, it gave her the status of martyr, almost saint, it enabled her to display superb courage and dignity, it distracted any censure as to her life by fixing attention on the extraordinary scene of her death, which gave her an opportunity to show herself once and for all, as a woman dying, not in expiation of any crimes, faults, and follies, but simply because she had remained true to her Faith.

She protested that she had been unjustly condemned by those who had no jurisdiction over her and the obvious truth of this heightens the pity and indignation felt at her terrible fate. Her complaints were better founded than she knew. It was, at the time, firmly denied that the Babington plot was the work of Walsingham, and Mary could not even have been fully aware that she had stepped into a trap when she replied to George Gifford's first letter. But this has little to do with her character; her letter to Babington is not altered in any way by the fact that she had been enticed by her enemies to write this damning epistle. Much blame has been given to the action of Sir Francis Walsingham in concocting the scheme for the destruction of Mary, and to Lord Burleigh and Elizabeth for sanctioning this crafty expedient. This manner of outcry is out of place and these severe judgments of one age on another distort history. Nothing is more likely to confuse an historical issue than the setting up of arbitrary standards of ethics and morals, of honour and integrity for people whose problems we do not have to face, whose circumstances we find it hard to realize and whose difficulties we can scarcely grasp. Many a leisured scholar whose own life has been free of temptation and peril, who has been bred in peace and lived in ease has sat at a comfortable desk and written with violent scorn of the statesmen of another age who lacked his own nice sense of honour.

No one in the public life of the sixteenth century can be judged by the standards of ideal behaviour nor even by what would have been considered acceptable by an English gentleman of three hundred years later, and to attempt to do this is to create the confusion of false values.

Walsingham's expedient appears clumsy to us, but the English have always had a preference for judicial murder over secret assassination, and, a law-abiding people, love to cloak violent deeds with a show of order.

Walsingham's own attitude he himself defined clearly in the protest he made at Mary's trial when she alluded to his possible employment of Ballard: "I call God to record that as a private person I have done nothing unbeseeming an honest man. Nor, as I bear the place of a public man, have I done anything unworthy of my place."

Indeed, what weapons did Walsingham use that have not been in the armoury of most governments? The spy, the *agent-provocateur*, the bribe, the intercepted letter, the stolen letter, the forged or falsified document, the trap, the bait, the false confession, these are the commonplace of governments and so accepted as to form the basis of many a brave tale of patriotism, devotion, and heroism. It is the romantics who condemn Walsingham; for them the cause is all, everything he did would be bold, clever and admirable if it had been done to release Mary, but employed against her becomes contemptible. A spy cannot, however, be regarded with scorn if he works on the other side, and as a hero if he works on our own. Too many such sentimental falsities have obscured the story of Mary. The exasperating question of political morality is beside the point, and may be left with the reflection that no man who had tried to rule with upright candour, lack of artifice, scorn of subterfuge, complete truthfulness and Christian charity in the sixteenth century could have maintained any public post a week. The same is probably true of any other century. Walsingham was faithful to his Queen, i.e., his country and his Faith. So was Burleigh and many of his subordinates, such as Amias Poulet; no one could have said more of any in that age.

We come to Elizabeth Tudor herself. When she is studied in relation to Mary Stewart she appears to be a far finer, far more attractive character, both as woman and ruler. Her memory has been loaded with virulent abuse because of her

treatment of Mary, but there is no reason to suppose that this was actuated by malice, jealousy, or vindictiveness. Her case is best stated by herself in the instructions she gave to Lord Shrewsbury and Beale, Clerk of the Council, in reply to the bitter protests of Mary contained in her letter to Elizabeth of November 8th, 1582. This is too long for quotation, but will be found in (from the Harclian MSS.) Von Raumer's "Elizabeth and Mary", page 232 et seq.

Elizabeth's defence to Mary's violent charges was, briefly, that she had rescued Mary from death (by sending Throckmorton to Scotland after Carberry Hill), given her an asylum from her enemies, supported her when no one else in Europe had done so, maintained her in state and comfort, refused to credit all the ugly reports to which Mary's conduct had given rise (conduct against which she, Elizabeth, had warned her), and which was to Elizabeth's own thinking highly suspicious and disgraceful, and had been willing to come to some reasonable accommodation with her as to her future.

Mary, however, had rendered this impossible, by refusing to recognize her own abdication, by insisting on her sovereignty of which her people had deprived her, by fomenting troubles in England, by plots like the Norfolk scheme, by attempts to bring foreign armies into England, by flattering Elizabeth to her face and intriguing against her and abusing her behind her back.

Mary, of course, was perfectly justified in her intrigues for her deliverance as Elizabeth was justified in frustrating them, but the Scotch Queen's persistent struggle for liberty does little credit to her foresight. Where was she, with her birth and history, to find liberty? What would she have done had she escaped? Hastened on to another marriage, another murder, another Carberry Hill and prison, another Langside, another flight? Surely she might have realized how utterly discredited she was in Scotland and, after the defeat of Kirkcaldy and Maitland, how hopeless was any attempt at her restoration to her hereditary honours. There were times when her son, under Catholic influence, seemed to lean towards her, but how could she rely on the stranger James VI had become—one who believed her guilty of his father's murder, who vacillated from one faction to another, and was not only a pensioner of England, but one whose conduct was inspired by his hopes of the English Crown.

There was France—Mary looked often and longingly in that direction, but the France of her youth, when the House of Guise had been mighty, had vanished. Neither Catherine de' Medici nor her sons had more liberty to offer Mary than had Elizabeth—a convent, complete seclusion in a dower castle, no more.

There was that wildest dream of all founded on the initial bitterness between the two Queens—the claim to the Crown of England—the dream of a revolt helped by Spain, France, the Pope, with Mary raised to Elizabeth's place, the ancient religion re-established, the heretics crushed. Could Mary, if she had had an ounce of political ability, have for a moment indulged in such a dream? She ought to have realized the strength of the Reformed Faith in England, the fierce patriotism of the English, their loathing of the Papist and the foreigner, their fearful memories of Mary Tudor, their dread and terror of the Inquisition, the panic fury raised by the massacre of Saint Bartholomew. Yet, up to the last, when lame, ill, prematurely aged, in pain and almost in despair, after being out of touch with active politics for eighteen years, she was ready to attempt this prodigious task and by the obscure Babington's help, mount the English throne by way of Elizabeth's body.

She never forgot her descent—"You cannot take away my faith and my English blood," she exclaimed passionately when her papers and money were seized after Babington's arrest. She was Queen of England, as she was Queen of Scotland, and that she thought sufficed against all argument of reason and common sense. It was the fatal doctrine of the Divine Right of Kings that her son so successfully exploited but that cost her grandson and her great-grandson their thrones, that Mary relied on with an obstinate courage that is not without grandeur.

The first half of her life she ruined by her violent passions, her giddy behaviour, her wild caprices and her lack of all prudence and judgment. These nearly brought her to the bloody end that would have been a fitting climax to such a career in such a period, but this she was saved from through the compassion of her half-brother, Moray, and the championship of Elizabeth. Then, breaking prison, she tempted Fate again and once more escaped death by headlong flight. She was then still young but her only hope of any peace or happiness lay in resignation to inactivity and obscurity.

Could she have foregone her ambition she might have achieved some measure of content, but the second half of her life was ruined by her inability to believe that she was set aside and discredited, that any fault of her own was responsible for her disasters, and her wilful refusal to realize that there was no place for her any longer in the politics of Europe. When she first came to England she was allowed a fair measure of freedom which she used to hatch up, or at least to sanction the Norfolk rebellion. This might possibly have been successful for a while; but did Mary, with Darnley murdered, Bothwell in a foreign jail, and her son on the Scottish throne, see herself ruling England by the side of Norfolk, a hesitant, unstable man of no authority? A grotesque prospect, surely, and how did she square her piety with this second marriage to a heretic? No doubt she hoped to convert her lover—a Catholic Bishop had suggested that Bothwell, though a scoundrel, might be a useful convert, so, possibly, Norfolk though a fool, might have been acceptable to the Vatican. Communications with the Pope were produced at Norfolk's trial and helped to overwhelm him, and his conversion seems to have been mooted, but, on the surface, this acceptance of a Protestant husband seems one more proof that Mary was guided by no fixed principle, but merely by expediency and self-interest.

It is regrettable that we have no contemporary account of Mary by a woman. She had several intimate friends of her own sex—the four Maries, the Countess of Argyll, her half-sister, the wife of Huntly, and several others such as the Countess of Atholl, who after the sudden death of her husband (attributed to poison and added to Morton's long list of crimes) offered to share her captivity. We hear of humbler friends, faithful servants who remained with her to the end and fervently treasured her memory—Elizabeth Curle, a Protestant and wife of the poor faithless secretary, Joan Clan Kennedy, "Bastien's wife", Susan Kirkcaldy and others, who comforted her at the last and shared her intimate trifles. Not one of them has left a record of Mary, for all accounts of her we must rely on men. The women of her story are vague figures who left little record behind them. We have some energetic letters from Moray's widow, Agnes Keith, some business communications from Jane Gordon, Bothwell's wife, a few anecdotes of Lady Huntly, of Mary Seton, of Mary Fleming, of Margaret Douglas, nothing more. Mary claimed that Margaret Lennox,

her mother-in-law, came to recognize her innocence before she died, but this lady and her thoughts and actions are obscure.

Mary succeeded in some sort of friendship with Lady Shrewsbury, "Bess of Harwicke", whose daughter by her former marriage to Sir William Cavendish became Mary's sister-in-law. The intimacy between these two gifted and difficult women did not run smoothly; there were troubles between the Earl and his wife and in the end the lady had to go on her knces before Elizabeth and her Council and take back some scandals she had spread about her husband and his captive.

This gossip had gone so far that "reports had been heard" that Mary had had children by Shrewsbury. How valuable would be a frank memoir on Mary, written by the termagant Lady Shrewsbury.

Two points about Mary are of especial interest, her beauty and her health.

The first is not helped by her portraits; we can reconstruct, with tolerable accuracy, her appearance in official costume, "*robe de parade*", but not her charm, her vivacity, her alluring grace. We have no sketch of her in male attire, at the masque or in disguise, no drawing of her in the humble gown that became so piteously dishevelled after Carberry Hill, no drawing of her in voluptuous idleness, taking her ease on the down cushions of her sumptuous bed, or riding the heather in helm and mail.

The head of the figure on Mary's tomb is supposed to have been taken from a death mask and the smooth countenance bears a likeness to that of the authentic portraits. Could, however, those convulsed features that death turned into those of an old woman and that "moved up and down" for a long while after they were lifeless, ever have become so composed and serene? There is not much likelihood that Mary's beauty long survived—by the time of the Darnley marriage it became "other than it was", and when she was united to Bothwell she was quite ruined in appearance, nor is it likely that she ever recovered the lovely bloom that Brantôme had admired. What remained was probably her grace, her dignity, her vivacity, her pleasant familiar manners, the art with which she wore her clothes, her jewels and her elaborate periwig hair dressing.

Though she is so beloved by the romantics and sentimentalists she was herself neither in character nor appearance; she was tall, well made in youth, afterwards stoutish, stooping

and broad-faced. She had a round forehead, small eyes, rather furtive in expression, very faint lashes and brows, an aquiline nose, a round chin, and full upper lip. After her flight from Lochleven she wore wigs; her natural colouring was an amber-brown inclined to auburn, with a pure complexion. She was gay, bold and reckless in manner, using flattery and cajolery with ease, equally ready with invective and passionate outcry; everything she did was coloured by the desire to gain her own ends, self-interest made her sometimes flexible, sometimes rigid. She could be, in her own cause, cunning, subtle, and superficially clever; she was fertile in resource and quite unscrupulous as to the means she employed to obtain her desires. Since she was thus integrally selfish her charm must have lain in her vivid animation, her well-bred courtesy, her high animal spirits, her swift turn from coaxing to command, her drop from pride to pathos, her insistence on her royalty, her admission of her frail womanhood.

She was never able to turn her personal fascination to any good account for herself or others; she lured many insignificant people to death or ruin, but her favours helped no one and her servitors were never able to help her; a dismal fatality seemed to attend all her actions and adds, in the eyes of posterity, to the sad glamour of her legend.

This mysterious ill-luck was in reality nothing but her own lack of prudence, her bad judgment of character and the fact that her essential untrustworthiness prevented any but shallow and (to her) worthless champions taking up her dubious cause.

Her health is almost as much in debate as her beauty. She was never strong, and the desperate events of her reign overwhelmed her physically. Biologically as well as emotionally, Mary suffered from her femininity. Despite romantic accounts of her bounding health in youth and the long fatigues she undertook, the evidence is in favour of an unbalanced constitution; she was subject to fainting fits from her girlhood and in her early twenties was already complaining of what seems some organic disease—the pain in her side and “my old malady”. That she could be, when she wished, energetic, is no proof of her robust health, the most delicate ailing woman can undertake, under the spur of the ardent mind and the eager spirit, exertions that seem incredible. She had several severe illnesses like that at Jedburgh, which seem of hysterical origin; the birth of her son and its attendant miseries, the miscarriage (or

abortion) at Lochleven must have further weakened her constitution.

In the latter half of her life she was constantly ill, a state due more, probably, to a fretting mind and those old maladies than to the rigours of her English prison. What was her actual disease or diseases is not clear; Nau denies that she "is dropsical or suffers from a cancerous leg"; several reports speak of her as stout, though the Sheffield portrait shows her rather as gaunt and haggard.

In her early forties she was spoken of as an old, sick woman and she seems to have been quite disabled, almost without the use of one arm and hand—was this rheumatism, arthritis, or paralysis? We hear also of a "deslusion" falling down her neck. Poulet mentions that her "family" were up with her all night because of her illness. Yet the indomitable creature at this very period—1586—was planning a desperate escape in the course of which she was prepared to suffer hardship and fatigue.

She had a doctor in constant attendance; it was leaning on his arm that she entered the hall set for her trial, and she had to be supported to the place of execution.

Her tears were shed continually—she "blubbered" at any moment of crisis, and to break into sobs when faced with a difficulty was her usual refuge. This habit must have much marred her beauty; it is strange that it did not ruin her sight. Another Queen of France went practically blind after a few months of prison tears.

As to Mary's treatment as an English prisoner there are varying accounts. Elizabeth maintained that she kept her as well as herself and Mary certainly never lacked some state; her secretaries, her women, her gentle people, her cook, her servants to the number of thirty and fifty, her horses and carriages—she was never without. The meticulous list of her possessions taken after her death shows that she had a surgeon, an apothecary, a physician, and a priest in her retinue, also that she possessed many articles of luxury, jewels, trinkets, plate, the furniture and vestments for a "massing priest", fine linen, bed furniture, perfumed gloves, watches, lutes, virginals, looking-glasses, sets of tapestries, many very rich gowns jewelled and furred, besides three "cloths of state" and a coach and horses.

During the early part of her imprisonment she was even better kept; in 1570 Lord Shrewsbury was allowed fifty-two

pounds a week for her maintenance. Elizabeth, with much chaffering and grudging paid these expenses; England and her Queen was always poor. Mary enjoyed the use of her French dowry; this was often delayed or only sent in small portions, and her property was said to be underlet and badly managed so that she never received her due. Nevertheless she seems to have had, occasionally at least, large sums to dispose of, as witness the costly gift sent to Ronsard, the 2,000 crowns given to Curle on his marriage to Elizabeth Mowbray and the bags of ready cash, about 30,000 French crowns, seized by Elizabeth's Commissioners in 1586. Her various retainers had considerable sums in their possession on her death. Part of this dowry she spent in forwarding her cause abroad; first in supporting Lethington and Kirkcaldy, afterwards in helping the various agents who were conspiring in her name. She borrowed five hundred pounds from Norfolk and repaid him from a large sum advanced by the Papal agent, Rudolf.

It was natural that she should thus dispose of her revenue, but it was also natural in Elizabeth to resent it, and finally to seize her secret store.

Mary was also allowed an embroiderer to help her in her great diversion of needlework, and she was not stinted in material; Poulet's inventory details two complete sets of bed furniture, "black velvet garnished with blue lace" and "net work and holland intermixed" pathetically "not half finished" and "sewing silk and raw silk of all colours".

Some of Mary's property had been sent from Scotland, some she bought, but she seems to have been allowed a free hand in purchases; she wrote constantly to France for different commissions, including pets, birds and dogs, Barbary fowls to be reared in cages, poodles, pigeons, "beautiful little dogs" as well as gold and silver stuffs and silks, "the most costly and new now worn at Court, coifs with gold and silver crowns, the new kinds of head-dress from Italy, veils and ribands wrought with gold and silver". She was also allowed to send presents of poodles to the King of France—1579.

None of this seems to indicate a severe imprisonment, especially when it is added that she was allowed to go frequently to Buxton for her health. On the other hand, something must be allowed for Mary's own acid complaints sent to Châteauneuf and Mauvissière in 1586 from Tutbury, when she was in the charge of the severe Amias Poulet.

She protested that her apartments were damp, draughty, the plaster of the walls admitting the air, sunless, and the furniture covered with mould. So unhealthy was this wretched place that several of her women were ill and her doctor feared for her life if she continued to reside at Tutbury. The roads were so bad that carriage or horse exercise was impossible and the garden, the sole place left for taking the air, was "more like a pig-stye".

Added to these discomforts, the place was filled with "the lowest people" so that no order could be maintained, the stench of the cess-pools was intolerable, especially every Saturday when they were emptied, and Mary had no private room. She also feared for her life (with some reason, Poulet had resolved to kill her on any attempt to escape), and was agitated by the old memories the place revived and the thought of a tortured priest who had been hanged "on the walls opposite my windows".

Mary was very ill at this time and could hardly stand, her leg was "grossly wrapped" as Lady Poulet observed, and she could not lie at ease for the pain of her aching body; a feather bed was procured for her, however. It is a curious point that the rooms where she had passed her years of splendour in Scotland were dark and small, and that she was strongly censured for bringing Darnley to a damp, disused and mean house.

Mary's accomplishments have been made much of; we are not able to judge of these. Ronsaid trained her in courtly verse, not to much effect, if she wrote the Casket Sonnets; she could play, sing, and dance, probably, as Melville said—"fairly for a Queen". There are "a great many books" in Poulet's inventory, but unhappily the titles are not given; she says she read much, but we do not know what kind of literature. A paper of reflections written by her in captivity is so commonplace as to be worthless—a mere collection of orthodox sentiment.

She was an adroit and facile letter writer, a skilful and ready conversationalist; she showed some wit but neither humour nor sensibility, she has left no trace of any interest in art, she set no new fashion and encouraged no writer, painter, or sculptor. Her tastes were those of her caste and period. She might have developed differently in this direction had she avoided the storms that brought her down; because of these same tumults we cannot judge of her as wife or mother or

daughter; early orphaned, early separated from her mother, wed three times, but briefly and tragically, divided from her son almost from his birth, Mary's dramatic life was in much frustrate, unnatural and stunted.

Much has been argued as to her duplicity. Once this is granted, the case for her, resting as it does so largely on her own word, is considerably weakened. A single instance other than those in the body of this book, may be given in this summing up of her character. In the midst of the Babington conspiracy, at which she was eagerly assisting, Mary wrote to Elizabeth, 22nd March, 1586.

"I assure you upon my honour and conscience that I do not think you will find that I have ever engaged in any manner whatever in any enterprise against you, as I abhor, more than any person in Christendom, such detestable and horrible deeds."

In that March of that year Mary had sent minute instructions to Châteaucous as to how he might smuggle messages to her hidden in the soles of shoes, written on linen, etc., and in the May she wrote to Charles Paget, her agent, that "the undertaking (of Philip II) appears to me the safest and most proper to further my affairs and entirely to get rid of the malice of this Queen (Elizabeth). We can no longer expect that gentle remedies will cure these ulcers. . . ." She adds that she is wishful to deliver her son to the King of Spain or the Pope, and that if James will not become a Catholic, Philip II is to be her heir, concluding "this must be kept secret, for if it were to transpire I should lose my jointure in France, in Scotland a complete breach with my son would follow, and in this kingdom my entire ruin".

Mary was in desperate straits and could find many plausible excuses for her duplicity, the only weapon of the defeated, but it is not astonishing that Elizabeth, with these intercepted letters before her, should view coldly the captive's appeals and flatteries.

And what of the value of Mary's words? If, as has so often been said, the Lords were proven liars, what was she? If despair could drive her to these methods in 1586, terror may have done so in 1568 when she denied the "casket letters". No defence of her based on the assumption of her integrity and truthfulness is valid.

This is not Elizabeth's story, but we may consider for a moment her attitude towards the execution of Mary. She has been, as she feared to be, greatly vilified for this action, which,

there is no doubt, cost her great agony, and brought about a nervous collapse of mind and body that was in no way feigned. She had twice saved Mary's life and had cast over every expedient to be rid of her with safety and decorum; Mary was a dangerous enemy and had been, during her captivity, a focus for rebellion and invasion. Her restless, reckless intriguing, natural enough from Mary's point of view, had fostered the bitter distrust that Elizabeth had long felt towards the woman who, in early girlhood, had claimed her crown. The clamour of the people and the demand of the Parliament had been always for the execution of Mary, again and again Elizabeth had resisted petitions for the death of the "viper" "curled on England's hearthstone".

Elizabeth wished for Mary's death, but shrank from the odium of ordering it; she was fully alive to the claims that Mary had on her as kinswoman, fellow queen and voluntary captive; she had a strong caste feeling and detested the thought of fallen royalty; a Queen beheaded not so long ago had been her own mother and this memory must have gnawed at Elizabeth's already jangled nerves.

At the same time she was convinced that Mary was a murderer, a wanton, a deceitful intriguer, and one who had planned to take her own life, and she was harried by the strong pressure of her ministers, who urged her to do away with the woman who utterly prevented England from enjoying peace and safety.

Torn by these agonies of indecision she signed the death warrant, and in the same mood of frantic distress turned on those who put it into execution. She declared that she had only signed the warrant in order that it might be used in the case of a rising or an invasion, and she let loose her wrath on William Davison, heavily fining this unfortunate secretary who had, she declared, misunderstood her orders.

This appears the depth of meanness, but it is always possible that Elizabeth did really intend an indefinite delay, and that her ministers, eager to be rid of Mary, forced her hand by using the provisional warrant without her knowledge.

There is nothing to be said about James VI in this connection; this strange character played a negative part in his mother's story. Whatsoever he believed of her he preferred to take English money rather than to champion her fallen fortunes. The question of his birth it was to the interest of

most people to hush up, but it is always possible that he was the son of David Rizzio; he seems not to have borne the least likeness to Darnley and Mary's behaviour must always throw a strong doubt on the parentage of her son. The evidence of Randolph and Foys (Foix), the French Ambassador, against Mary on this point, is very strong.

John Knox is a character who plays a notable part in the tale of Mary Stewart; the obvious drama of the sharp contrast between the lovely young Papist Queen and the grim old Puritan, the picturesqueness of his invective against "this scarlet woman", and his thunders for her condign punishment have made many writers over-emphasize his importance in Mary's life.

He did, certainly, focus and express the Protestant feeling against the Queen, but whether her fate would have been any different had he not been there to voice the popular mistrust must be much doubted. By no means is he "the villain of the piece", harrying persecuted innocence and rejoicing over its downfall. Mary's champions delight to depict him as a sour, bitter fanatic, and a violent, rude, harsh old man he certainly was, but we must be careful how we juggle with terms. Knox cannot be a fanatic because he was a staunch Protestant and Mary a martyr because she was a staunch Catholic. Knox may be considered a martyr to his Faith when he sat chained to a French galley oar and Mary a bigot when she wrote to the Pope declaring her one thought was the restoration of the Supreme Church in England, and begging him to grant her absolution for the sugary lies with which she was obliged to soothe Elizabeth. It may be granted to both of them that each was sincerely attached to the religion that they professed. John Knox was a type objectionable in much to the modern mind; we have outgrown the need for the zealot, but he suited his own period and his own people, and had the virtue of blazing courage and the driving force of intense conviction.

It should be noted that his diatribes against Mary were, in the conclusion, justified. However innocent her masques, her ruffing in male attire, her coquettries with French poets and Italian lute players, however blameless she might have been in the matter of her marriages of passion, in the upshot she did cause war, murder, confusion and tumult, and fled her country, a branded criminal, to be a cause of bloody discord all her days.

We cannot consider Mary's story without being impressed by the tremendous scandal evoked by the murder of Darnley in an age when such crimes were common. Nearly all the men concerned in high affairs during this Queen's reign were snatched away by violent death—Archbishop Beaton, Moray, Morton, Huntly, Argyll, George Gordon, Lennox, Archbishop Hamilton, Chastelard, Rizzio, and a crowd of underlings, perished by assassination or on the scaffold, while the elegant Lethington and the fiery Bothwell died miserably and mysteriously in prison. Atholl and Mar died with suspicion of poison, and at no time and in no place could life have been held on more uncertain tenure nor morality, public and private, been so low.

Political assassination was allowed. Mary's confessor, Roche Mameret, withdrew from her after the Bothwell marriage, though the Pope sanctioned the wholesale butchering of Saint Bartholomew. Roman prelates held that the assassination of William of Orange and that of Elizabeth might be justified. Mary's cousins, the two Guise brothers, were brutally and treacherously murdered by Henri III, but none of these crimes was regarded with the wholesale horror that Darnley's death aroused in Romanist and Protestant alike.

One reads, on every hand, a shocked detestation of this clumsy deed that seems to belong to another age and of a universal desire for revenge on the murderers, of passionate argument as to who these murderers were, of lamentations and invective that continued for a generation until everyone concerned, even remotely, with the slaughter at Kirk o' Field was dead. And this despite the fact that the victim was little loved, nothing admired, of small importance to any save a faction, and might, in an age brutal, cynical and practical, have been considered better out of the way.

Why, then, this ceaseless, fierce and swelling clamour as to the truth of this ugly but not uncommon night's work? By an odd paradox it was the murderers themselves who made it their business to excite execration for their crime. The Lords, most of whom had had a hand in the affair, and one of whom, Morton, confessed as much and died for it, did all in their power to emphasize the odium of Darnley's death in order thereby to ruin Mary and Bothwell. It was, therefore, the furiously expressed horror of the murderers themselves that helped to rouse that popular rage against the Queen that would,

but for the intervention of Moray and Elizabeth, have sent her to the stake or the block in 1567.

Darnley had an unquiet ghost : in the age when so many murdered men lay forgotten in their graves, his restless spirit haunted the minds and consciences of others than those who had strangled him so callously. Ghastly portents, phantoms and visions preceded the crime, and it was scarcely committed before there was wailing for vengeance in the streets of Edinburgh. The horrid slaughter of the poor servant whose nerve broke down swept a blast of horror over the whole country as if it were indeed damned until this outrage was revenged. The young King's unshiven ghost was offered much guilty blood; one by one his murderers or those who had " looked through their fingers " at his murder, from Moray, Bothwell and Lethington to such mean wretches as Nicolas Hubert or George Dalglcish, Cullen (whose wife Morton desired), and Morton himself perished violently, until only Mary remained.

She was not tried for her husband's murder, that matter was hushed up, but assuredly she thought of him when she prepared to feel the axe in Fotherinhay. She was cruelly denied a priest to console her last hours—did this galling injustice make her think of one hurled to Judgment with all his sins on his soul?

The horror of Kirk o' Field is stressed in the end of Huntly, who had been like Bothwell's shadow, bartering his sister for his estates, playing jackal till there were no more spoils to share, then turning on his leader. This man, whose character we can only glimpse from imperfect records, but who appears to have been treacherous, subtle, violent and false, died under odd circumstances of horror. After a day of hearty sport and feasting he fell into a sudden convulsion, stared upwards, and muttering one word " Look! Look! Look! " expired. His men, peering into his treasure chest, fell into like fits, but recovered: their exclamation was " Cold! Cold! Cold! "

The Earl's death chamber was disturbed by strange sounds and the tale went that Huntly was " rising again ". Such is the tale related by Knox's secretary, Bannatyne, and it shows, whatever foundation it may have in fact, how the murder of Darnley was regarded.

What sort of character does Mary Stewart, the heroine of this violent, brutal, sensual story appear when we have studied all we know of her? Assuredly as part of it, not as violently

detached from it, a pure, sensitive, exquisite creature seeking an ideal romantic love, a heroine from the pages of writers of another age, one of the delicate ladies with which Sir Walter Scott or Lord Tennyson delighted the readers of the nineteenth century. Mary was no lovelorn "faery wight" from a ballad, no mysterious "*belle dame sans merci*", no introspective, sensitive, sentimental romantic, caught up in the web of ideal longings, turning with disgust from the earthly passions that finally ensnared her against her will. She was no "Princesse Lontaine" sighing on the distant shores of dim fantasy. Every word in her tale proves her to have been exactly of her own place and time—the female of the species of which the males were Bothwell, Moray, Morton, Huntly. She was bold, ambitious, buoyantly gay, seductively agreeable, and impulsively generous when her fortunes went well, passionately resentful, unscrupulously intriguing, vindictively angry when they went ill, sagely and cunningly using her feminine weapons as the men about her used their masculine weapons, and always in adversity or prosperity brave, reckless, imprudent, and impatient.

She was led by the desires of the moment, lustng after all the good things of life, sensuous, amorous and incapable of fine feelings, of sensitiveness, of remorse or regret, with superficial but attractive talents, with an impressive personality that she exploited to the full, with a gift for furtive intrigue but none for government and utterly lacking in broad, patriotic, generous, or far-seeing views. With her air of animation and almost feverish energy she re-acted quickly to the excitement of a pageant, an escape, a battle, a crisis, agreeable in her speech, but over flattering, so that her sincerity was suspect, splendid in her tastes, gorgeously dressed and massively adorned so that she gave an impression of great sophistication. Quick and active, unless ill, fond of the open air and sport, also of idleness and sedentary occupations, strong featured, pale, her much vaunted beauty consisting in some charm that has gone to the grave with her and can never now be catalogued.

Mary cannot be made into a consistent character like the creation of a poet or a novelist and forced into preconceived lines. Much of her temperament, many of her motives and actions, must remain obscure. Even to those who believe that she wrote the "casket letters" she is not of a necessity a wicked woman, one abandoned to all evil.

She was used to murder and she believed herself above the

law, she behaved as all around her behaved. Darnley was himself a murderer, she was completely enchanted by Bothwell and she was probably in a panic to save that odd quality—her "honour". Her husband must not live to disown another child.

There are many excuses for Mary's headlong descent to treachery, cruelty, falsehood and wantonness. She missed, through her own weakness and sheer ill-luck, opportunities of a successful life; she would have enjoyed the position of a Catherine of Russia and Bothwell had the makings of a Potemkin, but circumstances were against them and their enemies were as able as they were unscrupulous. Catherine would have found it difficult if a Moray had risen up to avenge the Czar Peter.

There is no study of Mary in the literature of her time; we have the records, the letters, the pamphlets, the squibs and ballads, but no imaginative interpretation. The subject was forbidden until this entrancing and elusive figure was nearly lost in the confusion of the past. It is, however, in contemporary literature and not in the pages of Chalmers or Scott, Swinburne or Froude, excellent as each is in his own sphere of historian, novelist, or poet, that we must seek the portrait of Mary heightened by the colours of the artist's fancy, interpreted by the sensitiveness of the artist's perceptions.

Frederic von Raumer quotes, with much affect, in his study of Mary Stewart, these lines from Hamlet:

*"And let me speak, to the yet unknowing world,
Of carnal, bloody and unnatural acts;
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters;
Of deaths put on by cunning and forced cause,
And in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fallen on the inventors' heads—"*

It is probable that the author of the Shakespeare dramas had often in mind the story of the Queen of Scotland that had been so clanged about Europe, and that some touches in the play of Macbeth where a Queen of Scotland murders a King of Scotland may be taken from her life.

It is, however, in another dramatist that we shall find some hint of idealized portraits of Mary—an oblique glimpse of her, as like reality as, say, a Titian portrait of a Charles V, a Velazquez's study of Innocent X. These are in the two

plays of John Webster, written between 1611 and 1622 in the author's early manhood, a generation after the execution of Mary and during the reign of her son James I and VI. Webster would be, of course, well aware of the story of Mary, or, at least, of such of it as was known to the world, and did in fact write a play about her French relatives "The Guise" (circa 1601), this famous family was often put on the Elizabethan stage, and while it would be fantastic to strain a likeness between the famous plays and the history of the Scotch Queen, it is, perhaps, not too fanciful to trace many points of resemblance between the two and to see in the Duchess of Amalfi the noble weak side, and in Vittoria Corambona the strong evil side of Mary Stewart. Webster may have visited the Abbey at Westminster where the tomb of the King's mother was being elaborately completed by order of the King.

The theme of these plays, at once intensified and clarified by the powerful imagination of a magnificent dramatist, that of the corruption of courts, is surely the atmosphere in which Mary, Rizzio, Bothwell and Darnley played out their dreadful parts. It is an atmosphere of murky horror, shot with gorgeous splendour, with the glitter of costly pomp, with the rich diversions of a ruinous idleness, tennis, the ring, the dance, the masque, but with no waft of fresh air, no breath from fresh flowers or open fields, no touch of sweetness, kindness, gay innocence, or wholesome humour, and with hardly a mention of the common, homely, pleasant things of everyday.

Webster's people, who seem to have a brassy outline and to wear metallic masks, move in a sphere at once exalted and unutterably base. Their own virtue is that half-lunatic sense of honour that accompanies insensate pride and ambition. The young men are mostly openly lechers, the young women harlots, or at least sensual, the old men panders, the old women bawds, yet loss of chastity is to be punished by death, and, amid this company where true love is unknown, wantonness provokes furics of revenge.

In just such a world did Mary Stewart glitter and flare out. These creatures of John Webster's are all gloomy tempered and elevated by a certain sombre grandeur above pettiness; they seem to sense their own damnation, to despise punishment, to scorn death, to destroy others and themselves with impartial brutality. They are, most of them, horned and fanged and indifferent to hopes of mercy. Yet remorse can turn them

maniac and the stench of blood poison them. So might a poet of Webster's temperament have seen the Court of Holyrood during Mary's reign. And so he would have added to the stature of these noble rustians; we have no hint that remorse maddened any of the high-born scoundrels who flaunted in the Edinburgh of the '60's.

Webster drew the skeleton of his plot from a book that may have been well known to Mary Stewart—the "Histories Tragiques" of Belleforest, a French version of Bandello's "Novelle", 1565, which Webster probably knew in the English translation, Painter's "Palace of Pleasure" (1566-1567). It is generally admitted that he has much ennobled the character of his heroine, and there is something great-hearted and high-minded about the unhappy Duchess, but we only see her burned by passion or enduring atrocious punishment—two aspects under which Mary Stewart was familiar to her generation. True, the Duchess is completely innocent and harmless, but her impulsive, secret, imprudent marriage savours of Mary's rash union to Darnley—"the mean match" that proved fatal. The love of the Duchess, like that of Mary, is sensual—the attraction between Antonio and his mistress is physical, and there is to the modern mind little delicacy in her expression of her passion; the age was not conscious of grossness in frankness—see Isabella in "The White Devil", this good, pure woman uses the coarsest expressions.

A glance at an enchantment like that Mary must have possessed is shown in Antonio's description of the Duchess:

"Whilst she speaks
She throws upon a man so sweet a look,
That it were able to raise one to a galliard
That lay in a dead palsy, and to dote
On that sweet countenance."

Ferdinand, the brother of the Duchess, has some traits of Moray—Bosala is a George Douglas, with his sour flattery of the great, his "whose throat must I cut?" as soon as the Prince speaks confidentially to him. He, and many others, is "a very quaint invisible devil in the flesh"—an "intelligencer" (spy); there were many such in Mary's story. There is a stress on the fact of the Duchess being, like the Scottish Queen, "a young widow". Her brother warns her against a second marriage that has not "honour" in it and she lightly swears

"I'll never marry". Ferdinand's "terrible good counsel" might be Moray to Mary :

*" You live in a rank pasture, here i' the Court;
There is a kind of honeydew that's deadly
'Twill poison your fame; look to 't, be not cunning
For they whose faces do belie their hearts
Are witches ere they arrive at twenty years
Ay, and give the devil suck."*

The Cardinal (modelled on the Guise Cardinals, as all such prelates of the theatre since) adds :

*" The marriage night
Is the entrance to some prison."*

And the other brother continues his menaces in terms that would have applied to Mary Stewart :

*" I would have you give over these chargeable revels:
A visor and a mask are whispering rooms
That were never built for goodness . . .

What cannot a neat knave with a smooth tale
Make a woman believe? Farewell, lusty widow."*

As soon as the brothers have gone the infatuated woman defies them, calls her confidant, Cariola, who holds some such position to her as Mary Seton held to Queen Mary, and resolves on her secret "marriage".

. . . *" If all my royal kindred
Lay in my way unto this marriage,
I'd make them my low footstools (stools)

So I, through frights and threatenings will essay
This dangerous venture. Let old wives report
I wink'd and chose a husband. Cariola,
To thy known secrecy I have given up
More than my life—my fame."*

So exactly might the Queen have addressed a confidant before either her secret marriage with Darnley or the irregular marriage with Bothwell, and her words that close the scene with

Cariola might, on either of these occasions, have come sighing from the over-charged heart of Mary :

. . . "Wish me good speed;
For I am going into a wilderness,
Where I shall find nor path, nor friendly clue
To be my guide."

The next scene might be one between Mary and Rizzio, or Mary and Darnley, the graceful, sensuous love-making of a passionate woman to an inferior :

"This is flesh and blood, sir:
'Tis not the figure cut in alabaster
Kneels at my husband's tomb. Awake! Awake, man!"

One line much resembles an expression in the Casket Letter "II".

. . . "Go, go brag
You have left me heartless; mine is in your bosom
I hope 'twill multiply love there."

The first act ends with Cariola's comment, that must be similar to many made by Mary's friends :

"Whether the spirit of greatness or of woman
Reign most in her, I know not; but it shows
A fearful madness. I owe her much of pity."

The second act of this drama, lurid, disgusting, full of the satanic foul humours of Bosala, the coarse treatment of the Duchess' illness, the hideous episode of the "Old Lady", the casting of the horoscope and other superstitions, the gross jokes and shameless treachery, is of the very fibre of Mary's tragedy. The cynical scene between Julia and the Cardinal reveals contemporary opinion of a Prelate of the Roman Church, and the furies of Ferdinand fit very well into the opinion entertained of Mary by her kinsfolk :

"O confusion seize her!
She hath more cunning hands to serve her turn,
And more secure conveyances for lust,
Than towns of garrison for service.

"I'll find scorpions to sting my whips
And fix her in a general eclipse."

Act three still bears echoes of Mary's story :

DELIO : " *What say the common people?* "

ANT. : " *The common rabble do directly say
She is a strumpet.*"

Then :

BOSALA : " *'Tis rumoured she hath had three bastards, but
By whom we may go read the stars.*"

Bosala then brings forward the excuse many people made for Mary :

BOSALA : " *I do suspect there hath been some sorcery
Us'd on the Duchess.*"

FERDIN. : " *Sorcery! To what purpose?*"

BOSALA : " *To make her dote on some desertless fellow
She shames to acknowledge.*"

But Ferdinand will have none of such "gulleries". He declares, as Moray would have declared :

"The witchcraft lies in her rank blood."

The love scene (Scene II of this Act) shows the taste of the period and the low level of even supposedly noble sentiment; these surely are the accents of Mary and one of her lovers, with the licentious jests, the easy merrymaking, the classical illusions, and the sudden pathos of the royal woman's :

*"You have cause to love me, I entered you into my heart,
Before you would vouchsafe to call for the keys."*

Then, when she is hideously surprised by the secret entry of her brother Ferdinand, there is Mary in :

*"For know, whether I am doom'd to live or die
I can do both like a Prince."*

Again her quick defence :

"My reputation is safe."

Countered by the terrible :

*"Dost thou know what reputation is?
. . . You have shook hands with Reputation
And made him invisible."*

When he has gone there is a faint echo of Kirk o' Field in the terrified woman's:

*"I stared
As if a mine beneath my feet were ready
To be blown up."*

Ferdinand's furious scorn of Antonio in Act IV voicing the nobles' disdain of Rizzio:

*"A slave that only smelled of ink and counters
And never in 's life looked like a gentleman."*

The second half of the play moves further from any resemblance to the story of Mary, though the atmosphere is surely that amid which she moved, and the madness of Ferdinand might be touched with some remembrance of the reputed madness of Bothwell.

The Cardinal is certainly the popular idea of one of the Guise Princes. His last words (his death has some likeness to the murder of the Guise brothers, 1588) and those of his brother and of Bosala mark them all as atheists and give an awful grandeur to the hideous story. So might any villain of Mary's chronicle have expressed himself:

FERD.: " . . . I do account this world but a dog kennel:
I will vault credit¹ and affect high pleasures
Beyond death . . .

*My sister, O, my sister! There's the cause on't
Whether we fail by ambition, blood or lust,
Like diamonds we are cut with our own dust."*

CARD. (to Bosala): "Thou hast thy payment, too."

BOSALA: "Yes, I hold my weary soul in my teeth;
'Tis ready to part from me. I do glory
That thou, which stood'st like a huge pyramid
Begun upon a large and ample base
Shalt end in a little point, a kind of nothing."

The Cardinal dismisses himself with a superb gesture:

CARD.: "And now, I pray, let me
Be laid by and never thought of." (Dies.)

¹ Surpass belief.

When Bosala is charged:

*"Thou wretched thing of blood,
How came Antonio by his death?"*

and answers on his last breath:

"In a mist: I know not how"

we seem to hear one of the miserable hired *bravi* who were tortured for the Kirk o' Field affair, being questioned on the rack in Edinburgh Castle.

The play ends, as Mary's tale ends, on a note of hope for her son:

*"Let us make noble use
Of this great ruin; and join all our force
To establish this young hopeful gentleman
In 's mother's right."*

"The White Devil"¹ is full of echoes of the story of Mary, both as regards the plot and the character of Vittoria Corrambona. This statement may seem odd to those accustomed to consider the Scotch Queen as a gentle, persecuted victim of fate, but there is abundance of evidence to prove that Mary was considered by very many of her contemporaries "a white devil", and that her love story with Bothwell was judged by many to be exactly as Webster depicts that of Vittoria and Bracciano. Another character, Ludovico, has some points of resemblance with Bothwell, who, for crimes and extravagance, banished and ruined, turns pirate.

*"Come, my lord,
You are justly doomed: look but a little back
Into your former life; you have in three years
Ruined the noblest earldom . . .*

*You have acted certain murders here in Rome,
Bloody and full of horror."*

Ludovico replies to his friends' attempts at consolation, as Bothwell might have spoken after Carberry Hill.

¹ The historic episode on which "The White Devil" is founded took place in the last years of Mary's life—in Rome, 1580-86. Monticelso is Cardinal de Montalto, afterwards Sixtus V. This does not prevent the possibility of Mary's story having been in Webster's mind.

*"Leave your painted comforts:
I'll make Italian cut-works in their guts
If ever I return."*

Vittoria is a gorgeous wanton, who contrives the murder of her husband and the poisoning of her lover's wife. (Mary was accused of a scheme to poison Jane Gordon.) Vittoria is brought to trial and sent to a convent as it was once proposed to relegate Mary. The scene of her trial could scarcely have been written without the story of the Scotch Queen coming into the author's mind; the Ambassadors of France and England are present, and the Cardinal Monticelso (another variant of the Guise Princes, though historically Felice Peretti) is the Judge.

Monticelso says :

*"For, sir, you know we have naught but circumstances
To charge her with, about her husband's death
 . . . the proofs
Of her black lust shall make her infamous
To all our neighbouring kingdoms."*

Vittoria's attitude during the trial is that of Mary, not at Fotherinhay, but during her pride before Carberry Hill.

MONT.: *"Her gates were choked with coaches, and her rooms
Outbraved the stars with several kinds of lights
When she did counterfeit a prince's court
In music, banquets, and most riotous surfeits
 . . . Next the devil
Adultery enters the devil murder."*

FRANCISCO: *"Your unhappy husband is dead."*

MONT.: *"And look upon this creature who was his wife.
She comes not like a widow. She comes armed
With scorn and impudence: is this a mourning
habit?"*

VITTOR.: *"Had I foreknown his death, as you suggest,
I would have bespoke my mourning.*

*Humbly thus,
Thus low, to the worthy and respected
Lieger Ambassadors, my modesty
And womanhood I tender; but withal
So tangled in a cursèd accusation*

*That my defence of force, like Portia's,
Must personate masculine virtue. To the point
Find me but guilty, sever head from body,
We'll part good friends: I scorn to hold my life
At yours or any man's entreaty, sir."*

ENGLISH AMB.: "She hath a brave spirit."

FRANCISCO: "My lord, there's great suspicion of the murder,
But no sound proof who did it.

*The act of blood let pass; only descend
To matter of incontinence."*

MONT.: ". . . I will produce a letter
Wherein 'twas plotted he and you should meet
At an apothecary' summerhouse . . ."

Hard on this with its reminder of Buchanan's tale of Mary and Bothwell meeting at the Exchequer House, comes Vittoria's defence, very opposite to Mary.

VITT.: "Sum up my faults, I pray, and you shall find
That beauty and gay clothes, a merry heart
And a good stomach to a feast, are all
All the poor crimes that you can charge me with."

Monticelso, summing up against Vittoria, declares of her as Randolph declared of Mary:

"Alas, I make but repetition
Of what is ordinary and Rialto talk,
And ballated and would be played o' the stage
But that vice many times finds such loud friends
That preachers are charmed silent.

*For you, Vittoria, your public fault
Joined to the condition of the present time
Takes from you all the fruits of noble pity.
Such a corrupted trial have you made
Both of your life and beauty, and been styled
No less an ominous fate than blazing stars
To princes. . . ."*

Vittoria is sent to the Convertites, where she is visited by Bracciano, the scene between them, with the ugly mocking accompaniment by Flamineo, the references to "Your treasury

of love letters" and to Vittoria's escape in a page's suit might be a poetic version of the story of Bothwell and Mary Stewart.

Vittoria marries her love, he is poisoned and dies as Bothwell was believed to have died, raving mad. His ghost rises "holding a pot of lily flowers with a skull in it", and Flamineo, who has played towards him the part that Huntly played to Bothwell, demands:

*"In what place art thou? In yon starry gallery?
Or in the cursed dungeon?
. . . this is beyond melancholy."*

The final scene of blood is redeemed by a grim nobility; the doomed Flamineo is asked what he thinks of:

*"Nothing; of nothing: leave thy idle questions.
I am i' th' way to study a long silence:
To prate were idle. I remember nothing.
There's nothing of so infinite vexation
As man's own thoughts."*

Vittoria dies gloriously.

*"Yes, I shall welcome death,
As princes do some great ambassadors.

Oh, my greatest sin lay in my blood
Now my blood pays for 't."*

Her death redeems her; her accomplice praises her nobility.
(This might be read as a hit at Elizabeth.)

FLAM: " . . . Know, many glorious women that are famed
For masculine virtue have been vicious,
Only a happier silence did betide them;
She hath no faults who hath the art to hide them."

VITT.: " My soul, like to a ship in a black storm
Is driven, I know not whither."

Flamineo's last words are like those of Hay of Tala on the scaffold, without that ruffian's confidence in a final redemption:

*"Tis well yet there's some goodness in my death
My life was a black charnel . . ;
. . . Farewell, glorious villains!"*

Again the final note of hope is struck by the young Prince, who shall rise on all this horror and ruin, and declares :

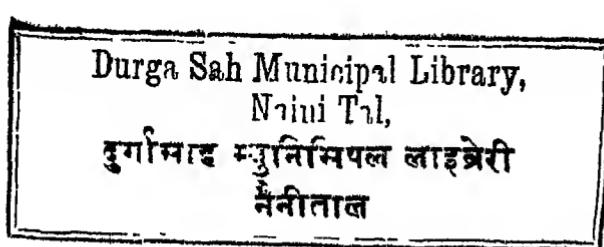
*"All that have hands in this shall taste our justice
As I hope Heaven."*

It is possible that John Webster wrote his two dramas without any thought of the Scotch tragedy that had puzzled, excited, and fascinated the world thirty to forty years before (the "Historie" of William Stravenage was, however, published in 1624, the year after "The Duchess"), and that the similarities are merely coincidences. These tales of Renaissance Courts have all a marked likeness, and to push the parallels far would be vexatious.

It may, however, be admitted that the atmosphere of lust, murder, battle, treachery, magnificence, priesly intrigue is that of Mary's tale.

The ruffianism of paid underlings, the fierce value put on honour and chastity, the rarity of the same qualities, the insolent wickedness, the dead who "rise again", the indecent talk, the blind superstition, the ignoble vices, the noble courage, the bitter self-disdain, the crude materialism, the haste to be rid of a world rotten and corrupt, is exactly the tone of the European Courts of the latter half of the sixteenth century.

Amid such sulphurous surroundings Mary Stewart, Darnley, Bothwell, Rizzio, Morton, Moray and such dark shapes as George Douglas indulged their appetites, struggled for power and pence, for pleasure and revenge, and died bitterly regretting nothing but lost fleshly delights—"farewell, glorious villains!"



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